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BARCAROLLE.

ADAPTED TO THE MUSIC OF RICARD.

BY GEORGE P. MORRIS.

I.

The harvest moon is streaming
  Over land and lake,
The nodding flowers are dreaming
  In the brier and brake,
Her silver mantle covers
  Fruit and forest trees,
And, round the bower of lovers,
  Roves the balmy breeze.

II.

The queen of love is shining
  In her belt of light—
Then why art thou reclining
  With the drowsy night?—
Rise, like the subject waters,
  Yield to her control,
And, fairest of earth's daughters,
  Hear my barcarolle.

Undercliff, April, 1861.

THE HUNTED FELON;

OR,

THE FORTUNE-TELLER OF LYNN.

A ROMANCE OF THE OLDEN TIME.

BY MRS. C. F. GERRY.

CHAPTER III.

> "And such is human life at best—
> A mother's, a lover's, the green earth's breast;
> A wreath that is formed of flowerets three,
> Primrose, and myrtle, and rosemary—
> A hopeful, a joyful, a sorrowful stave,
> A launch, a voyage, a whelming wave,
> The cradle, the altar, and the grave."

With a thousand tumultuous emotions, Ralph Heathcote watched the movements of Grace Ward, her uncle, and the young man, to whom she had so touchingly appealed.

"Who is that fellow?" he asked.

"Dick Crofton."

"Does he live hereabouts?"

"His father does—he's a Swampscot fisherman—one of the pious sort, and not much to my liking. Dick is master of the Petrel, a staunch little craft that plies between Boston and Savannah!"

"Does he own his vessel?"

"No, he isn't worth a hundred pounds in the world. He gives all his earnings to the support of an invalid mother, and a sister who has been a cripple from her birth! They must suffer if he didn't help them."

"Whew!" ejaculated Heathcote, "then he's no match for the heiress of ten thousand pounds a year, the daughter of a noble house."

"Ah," rejoined Gault, "you're jealous!"

"I was for a moment, but I can't believe she would cherish aught save friendly interest in him. Pray, how did she make his acquaintance?"

"Why, she took passage in the Petrel, and the elderly gentleman who was to have been her escort, being detained by sickness, Crofton offered to take charge of her. The voyage was extremely perilous, and I've heard that he was very kind to her——"

"And so she's grateful to him," interposed Heathcote, quickly—"that's all!"

Gault smiled grimly as he muttered—

"By my faith, I hope it is all! But—but I have some insight into women's hearts, and it seems to me that Crofton has taken a deep hold of her fancy. Poor as he is, I should not like him for a rival!"

Heathcote looked at Crofton, with his fine, open countenance, an eye which could meet those of his fellow men without quailing, and the royal grace of his bearing, and growled an oath.

"Do you agree with me? Do you think him a dangerous person?" queried Gault.

"Decidedly dangerous!" and the speaker's brow knit, and a fierce glitter shot into the orbs beneath.

"You see, then, the necessity of playing your part to perfection."

"By Jove I do! From this hour that man's my foe! I'll snatch the prize from him, cost what it may!"

Gault smiled his approval, adding—

"Let's shake hands upon it! An hour ago I felt like a mariner who knows that the spar on which he is drifting is a broken reed; now I begin to take heart."

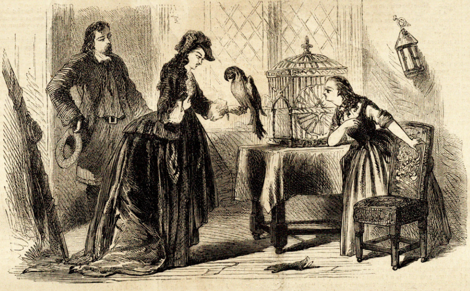
"The sight of Grace, the thought that she may be interested in Crofton has brought back my strength! I could face a dozen murdered women, and Moll Pitcher, too! I declare, I'll not suffer him to escort her much farther; I'll hurry on, and introduce myself to her and her uncle as their Westmoreland cousin!"

"No, no—that would be in bad taste! Since Dick Crofton has got the precedence, let him have it to-night, at least. When they reach home, you can go in, and tell the old gentleman all you had planned to say."

"You are a thousand-fold shrewder than I, Gault; I will do as you wish."

This conversation had taken place in a shadowy nook, to which they had retreated after the scene of the well, and whence they could watch the procession, as it wound away toward the village. They now separated; Gault remained with those who were searching for the murderer in the neighborhood of the glen, and Heathcote followed the rude litter. The solemn voice of the thunder could still be heard; the lightning still flashed; the winds went rioting through the boughs of the great trees, and the rain plashed down on the dead Mabel, her child, and the throng gathered about them, but Heathcote was watching Grace so intently that he heeded nothing else save the stalwart man at her side. He marked the confiding gaze she ever and anon lifted to his face, the tenderness with which he supported her, and felt a thrill of rage, when, as she sank, weary and exhausted, among the rocks, he raised her in his arms, and bore her on as if she had been a tired child.

[ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1861, BY ROBERT BONNER, IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.]



GRACE WARD AT CROFTON COTTAGE.

At length they reached the village, and the procession halted in front of the most imposing mansion in Lynn, a stately old pile, built on the Elizabethan model, and of gray stone. It was surrounded by a broad lawn, green as emerald and soft as velvet, and across this the litter was carried. A group of servants and neighbors had assembled in the hall, and their sobs and shrieks echoed out on the night air, as poor Mabel Ward and her child were borne in. The bearers paused to give them a momentary glimpse of the murdered ones, and then moved into a large apartment, furnished with the cumbrous splendor of those days.

"Shall we stop and assist in preparing the corpses for the grave?" asked the coroner.

"No—O, no; you have been very kind—we will do that ourselves!" and wringing the hands of his friends, the captain bowed them out. He closed the door for an instant, re-opened it, and with a pale, convulsed face, and trembling form, beckoned his faithful servants. They entered; again the door closed, and a weeping band surrounded the litter.

"They—they must be taken up stairs," gasped the old man; "I will carry my daughter, and you—you, nurse Watkins—you may carry the child!"

As he spoke, he lifted Mabel and bore her to the chamber, which had been newly furnished for her reception, while the nurse followed with the baby-corse. But we will not linger on that scene; nurse Watkins remained there during the day, keeping a solemn watch with one whom she had loved almost as fondly as if she had been her own child. Captain Ward staid an hour in the lonely room, when he turned away, and sought his stricken wife. She had been in violent hysterics ever since she heard of the murder, but when she perceived her husband she leaped from the bed, and bounding to him, wreathed her arms about his neck.

"I—I believe I have gone mad!" she exclaimed, while her eyes flashed with strange lustre.

The old man drew her to him in a convulsive embrace, and whispered something in her ear. The words seemed to soothe her; blessed tears came to her relief, and the paroxysm ceased. She crept back to her pillow, and the captain was ministering to her with almost womanly tenderness, when he was summoned to the parlor. There stood the young stranger, whom we described as he sat in the sibyl's house.

"Good morning," said Mr. Ward; "your face is familiar, and yet I cannot call you by name."

"I am Ralph Heathcote, of Westmoreland, sir!"

"What, the son of Sir Ralph, of Heathcote Hall!"

"The same, sir."

"Then you are my near kinsman! How much you resemble your father! Welcome—a thousand welcomes!"

"Thank you, thank you!" and now the young man's countenance grew grave, and his tones tremulous; "I find that I have arrived in a sorrowful time! Indeed, I did not know as I ought to trespass on you in your trouble——"

"Don't speak of that," interposed Captain Ward; "grief doesn't drive hospitality out! My heart warms to you, and—and—" and his lip quivered as he continued—"I trust you will be a comfort to me in my sorrow!"

"God grant that I may!" and he proceeded to condole with the old man after the most approved fashion.

"She—she was all I had—my only child, and I should be alone were it not for Grace, my brother's orphan child! She is here—she is completely overcome by the great shock which has fallen upon us, but you must see her!"

"I should be most happy to."

"Come with me, and I will introduce you."

Captain Ward drew his kinsman's arm within his own, and led him into the family keeping-room. The young girl lay on the antique sofa, where Crofton had placed her on returning from the wood; her head was pillowed on a damask cushion, which cast a faint glow over her pale cheek and brow, and her long, bright hair, damp with the perfumed waters with which they had sprinkled it, drooped in heavy masses about her face and neck. Her own maid was chafing her hands, and another woman waving a fan of tropic feathers, while young Crofton had knelt, and was holding a glass of wine to her lips

"Why, Grace, Grace," called her uncle, "they told me you had come out of that fainting fit!"

"She has, sir; she is conscious now," replied Crofton, "but she is weak as a child! See how she pants for breath!"

"She wants more air," said Heathcote, and he opened the window, and let in the fresh breeze and the rosy light of the summer morning.

At hearing a strange voice, Grace looked up; Heathcote had returned to the sofa, and she encountered his eyes, beaming with the tenderest pity.

"Grace," resumed Captain Ward, "the darkest day has its gleams of sunshine—this has brought beneath my roof Ralph Heathcote, the son of Sir Ralph, my well-beloved kinsman. He will be a great comfort in our time of need; have you strength to bid him welcome?"

"O yes," and the girl raised her head, adding, "I am very glad to see one of whom I have heard so much."

Though pale and languid, she looked passing fair, and Heathcote's homage was sincere, as he knelt, and kissing her hand, repeatedly exclaimed:

"Ah, sir, it is worth journeying over land and sea to find such a cousin as this beautiful Grace!"

And Crofton—where was he? The young man had drawn back, and stood for a moment irresolute; then he took his hat, and was about to leave the room when he heard the voice of Grace.

"Uncle, uncle," she said, in her sweet, earnest tones, "Captain Crofton is going—call him back."

"Crofton, Crofton, my niece wishes to see you before you go."

The gallant captain returned, and the maiden uplifted to him a flushed and tearful face.

"You have been very, very kind," she murmured; "I begin to think you are my life's good genius—how shall I thank you?"

"The pleasant consciousness of having served you is a sufficient reward! I only hope that you will not fail to call upon me whenever you need a friend."

Then moving to the old gentleman, he said:

"Can I be of any farther service to you—about the funeral, or otherwise?"

Captain Ward hesitated an instant ere he replied.

"Not now, not now! But I will let you know when the funeral is to take place, and—and perhaps we may want you for one of the pall-bearers."

"I will act as such if you desire it. Good morrow to you."

With these words Richard Crofton bowed and retired. When the door had closed upon him, Heathcote turned to Captain Ward and said:

"He seems quite a clever youth for one in his station."

"Yes, yes," rejoined his host; "he has aroused our gratitude by his kindness to Grace. He is master of a vessel that plies between here and the South, and last winter, while tarrying at Savannah, he rescued my niece from a burning house. Three months ago she engaged a passage in the Petrel with an old friend of mine, who had promised to be her escort; but just as they were ready to sail he fell sick, and Grace was about to give up the voyage when Crofton offered to be her protector. They had a stormy time of it, but he brought her safe into Boston. You see now how much we are indebted to him."

"Aye, there are warm hearts among the *bourgeois!*" ejaculated Heathcote.

"Captain Crofton can scarcely be called a *bourgeois!*" cried Grace.

"Why, yes, my dear," resumed her uncle; "his father is a Swampscot fisherman, and the family are as poor as any in the neighborhood."

"But you said yourself," continued Grace, "that Hugh Crofton was the soul of honor—that you would as soon have his word as his bond!"

"It is true."

"And his son is like him—he makes me think of the knights I have read about in tales of the old Crusaders. I have been a good deal in society, but I never met a nobler, a more interesting gentleman than the captain of the Petrel."

"He cannot, of course, be educated!" exclaimed Heathcote.

"Indeed he is!"

Captain Ward perceived his guest's sneering smile, and said:

"The girl has the right of it. They tell me the lad has occupied every moment of leisure in study—that he has dipped into all the sciences necessary to make him a good navigator, as well as Latin and Greek."

"And," chimed in Grace, "he is far better acquainted with polite literature than I am. He sketches, too, accurately, and plays the flute as I never heard it played before."

"Upon my word, he is an extraordinary personage," remarked Heathcote.

"His acquirements are great for a peasant lad," said Captain Ward; "and now I must leave you; I have painful duties to perform."

He passed out, and moved noiselessly along the corridor, as if he feared he might wake the silent sleepers in that darkened chamber. He ascended the staircase, and on the landing met a figure so closely muffled that he did not recognize her, till he encountered the gaze of Moll Pitcher's magnetic eyes.

"I have just left the room where your dead lie," she exclaimed; "had I not chanced to meet you, I should have called you from your guest! I have something particular to say—something that must be said in secret."

"Be it as you wish," and he led her into an apartment adjoining his wife's. What passed there I cannot now repeat; but Moll came forth in a few moments, pale and silent, and the old gentleman followed her, trembling in every limb. She had reached the foot of the staircase, when he spoke in a hoarse whisper:

"Moll, Moll," he gasped, "you will not relax your vigilance—you will not abandon the search?"

"No, no; if I move heaven and earth for it, I'll discover the felon who murdered your poor, poor Mabel and her child!"

"Thank you—bless you, woman, or witch, whatever you are! Hark ye, if you will do that, you shall have half my fortune."

"I am but an humble shoemaker's wife—you are rich and great—'tis but justice you should share with me! Keep up a good heart, and soothe her mother as best you can!"

With a significant glance and a peculiar nod, Moll retreated, and the stricken father was left to a sad task.

Ere nightfall their friends, and even Richard Crofton, had been notified that the funeral of Mabel Ward and her babe would take place the next day; that the procession would be formed at her father's house at ten o'clock, A. M., and proceed to Boston, where the corpses would be interred beside that of an infant son, in the burial ground in Copp's Hill.

At the appointed hour a throng assembled around the Ward mansion, and stood waiting for the mourners to appear. The Lynn clergyman offered a brief but impressive prayer, and then the massive hall-door was flung wide open, and young Crofton and three other men appeared, bearing between them two coffins, over which a velvet pall swept in gloomy splendor. Behind them came Captain Ward, supporting his weeping wife, and next to them walked Ralph Heathcote with the beautiful Grace leaning on his arm. Both were attired in deep mourning, and no dead face could have been whiter than the Westmoreland cousin's. There were no other relatives, but a few of the most respectable people had been invited to join the procession. The coffins were lifted into the hearse, which had been sent from Boston, the pall readjusted, and then the black horses, with their sable plumes, began to move. The mourners followed in Captain Ward's carriage—a great luxury in those days, which he had imported from England, and the bearers and the rest of the friends went on horseback. Thus the funeral *cortège* filed from the captain's gateway, and struck into the road leading to Boston. It was early in the afternoon when they reached the churchyard. The sky was cloudless, the breeze soft and balmy, and a flock of doves were sunning themselves on the roof of the church. Alas! how bitterly all this contrasted with the mourners who had come to bury their dead in the shadow of the church, where Mabel had been baptized in her infancy, and where she had often sat in the great square pew, with her parents, in the days of her childhood and youth! The procession was met at the entrance of the churchyard by the rector in surplice and bands, and with an open prayer-book. Moving on before the bier, he read in a deep, clear voice:

"I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die.

"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the Earth. And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."

Then the *cortège* paused before a freshly-dug grave, and a choir of white-robed girls sang a funeral anthem. Like one in a dream, Ralph Heathcote listened, as the sweet, sad strain went pulsing through the air; like one in a dream saw the two coffins lowered to their last resting place, and heard the clods rattle on the lids, and the minister say:

"Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God in his wise providence, to take out of this world the souls of our deceased friends, we therefore commit their bodies to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; looking for the general resurrection in the last day, and the life of the world to come, through our Lord Jesus Christ, at whose second coming in glorious majesty to judge the world, the earth and the sea shall give up their dead."

The beautiful beatitude, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord," was omitted on account of the violent death of Mabel Ward and her child; also the prayers, which sometimes follow the burial, and the service ended with a solemn benediction. When the procession began to move, Heathcote drew a long sigh of relief, and devoted himself assiduously to Grace, who clung with a nervous clasp to his arm, and sobbed wildly. As they resumed their seats in the carriage, he glanced back; a woman stood by the grave—it was Moll Pitcher!

CHAPTER IV.

> 'I remember the time, for the roots of my hair were stirred
> By a shuffled step, by a dead weight trailed, by a whispered fright,
> And my pulses closed their gates with a shock on my heart as I heard
> The shrill-edged shriek of a mother divide the shuddering night."

Late that night three persons stood on Egg Rock. The moon had gone down, and the only sound that could be heard, was the chafing of the waters round the isle, and the occasional shriek of the white gulls, as a footfall sent them soaring from their nests. Thus isolated, the trio had met to discuss a dark purpose; they were skillfully disguised, and spoke in a foreign tongue.

"Why are you so grim?" asked one.

"Because, because," and now the speaker's tones grew tremulous, "I believe I have undergone such torment as neither of you ever felt, since those corpses were found in the wood. Last night, at my cousin's earnest entreaty, I staid at the old Ward mansion, and I vow to you was haunted. The moment I closed my eyes, my fancy conjured up the horrid scene in the glen—and—and—I could swear that I heard two or three times Mabel's voice—faint, 'tis true, but her voice, nevertheless. Great Heavens, how it thrilled me! My blood seemed to freeze in my veins, and I buried my face in the pillow, lest I should see her in her shroud, standing at my side."

"Pshaw!" ejaculated a man, whom our readers have met before, "that's imagination! Ha! ha! how womanish you are growing!"

"Womanish indeed! I wish you could suffer as I do! Remorse has a serpent's tooth—it gnaws to the heart's core."

"Well, what think of me?" cried another; "what think of me? It was I who throttled her, who left her dead. I'm the hunted felon at your service!" and he bowed with mock gravity, and his eyes gleamed like live coals through his black mask.

"A bloody piece of work," said the first speaker.

"Did she resist?" queried Gault—"tell us all about it."

"Why, she landed at Salem, and in her anxiety to reach Lynn, set out on foot with her child in her arms. I overtook her near the Pirate's Glen, and dragged her to the spot where they found her. She struggled desperately, and when she saw it was to no purpose, knelt and besought me to spare her, and let her die at home. But I silenced her—cold steel did the business, and then it was but a moment's work to fling the child into the well. My part is performed—act up to your promise and all will be well. Give me the gold—the thousand guineas you promised—give me the gold, and I'll keep out of their way! I fear neither God nor man!"

Heathcote reluctantly drew forth his purse, and placed it in the murderer's hand. He hastily struck a light from the flint of his musket, counted it, and depositing the money in his pocket, resumed:

"I see you've played me no dishonest trick. Zounds! I've been poor enough, but I'm rich again. Hurrah!" and he took off his hat, and waved it exultingly about his head with one hand, while he clinked the gold with the other.

"'Tis the price of blood," said Heathcote, shuddering, "I would give you as much more if you would exorcise the ghosts that haunt me."

"Aye, I did not promise that!" and extinguishing his lantern, the bravado added, "I've no time to lose—I must be off."

"And whither?"

"I cannot tell even you. Perhaps we who have formed a brotherhood of guilt, shall never meet again. Farewell, Heathcote."

With these words the masked villain hurried to the spot where he had left his boat. It had drifted off, and so had Gault's and Heathcote's. A volley of oaths broke from his lips, as he announced their loss.

"What in the deuce has become of them?" cried Heathcote in alarm.

"They've floated away on the tide."

"I shouldn't wonder," said Gault thoughtfully, "if this was Moll Pitcher's work."

"Moll Pitcher—bah! She's been no nearer us than High Rock to-night, I'll warrant you."

"Yet if she has not, she may have wrought some spell to work us harm," suggested Gault.

"Nonsense, you're her particular favorite lately—she tells you I know not what good fortune, since you began to cross her palm with silver."

"Confound it, I hope a natural cause has swept away our boats!"

"But what are we to do?" asked Heathcote.

The three men stared at each other, and then at the sea in blank dismay.

"It won't do to tarry till daybreak, and hail the pilot boats."

"No, no, it would be madness. Can you swim?"

"Yes," was Gault's reply.

"And you?"

"Yes, like a fish."

"It cannot be more than three-fourths of a mile to the nearest part of Nahant—we can easily swim that distance."

The next moment they had plunged into the waters, which even on that midsummer night were restless around Egg Rock, and struck out boldly for the cliff-girdled peninsula, which is now such a fashionable resort. At length they reached it, and Heathcote at once arrayed himself in the elegant suit he had left in a cave near, and proceeded to the inn. His companions gazed after him till he was lost to sight, and then broke into a contemptous laugh.

"Credulous fellow," exclaimed Gault, "he believes the story you told him—he believes you have earned the gold he paid you."

"Yes, yes; he does not dream who the real murderer is—nobody save you and I know, and we can keep our secret—our black secret."

"That we can."

"And," resumed the masked stranger, "we have him, and consequently his uncle's family in our power. We have a long score to wipe out, a terrible purpose to accomplish—this is another secret. But we must not loiter; off with you to the Iron Works, and I will betake myself to my den. But hark ye, a moment; a pleasant wooing Ralph Heathcote will have over the grave of Mabel and her brat. Gault, is it not reward enough for all our crimes, to toss about this boy's heart like a football?"

"By the powers, it is—good morrow!" and thus they parted.

A few days subsequent to Mabel Ward's funeral, two youths, attired as sailors, might have been seen entering Moll Pitcher's house.

"Are you the fortune-teller of Lynn?" queried one, as the sibyl advanced to meet them. "We've just landed from the Meteor, and——"

"Hush," interposed the weird woman; "Moll Pitcher knows you, and you know me! Why attempt to deceive me, Hortense L'Estrange? The lone Nahant rocks and the surging sea have witnessed our meeting."

A low, nervous laugh broke from the girl, as she replied:

"There is a person in Lynn by whom I should not wish to be recognized, but I longed to come to you! Tell me—tell me all you know of my destiny."

Moll pushed back the clustering curls of false hair, which fell over her brow, and looked earnestly into those unquiet eyes, then consulted her cup, and shook her head.

"I see him," she began, dreamily; "he has often crossed my path of late, and I have read his heart better than he has read it as yet! He loves Grace, beautiful Grace Ward! Ever since he rescued her from death last winter, her image has haunted him! I have heard him speak her name with an utterance, which told it was the one dear name on earth; I have seen him watch her with his whole soul shining in his eyes; I have gazed at him when he thought himself in solitude; but I knew that he was revelling in a young man's first love dream!"

"Don't, don't," gasped Hortense; "don't dwell on the Present; look along the track of the Future!"

Moll peered more closely into her quaint cup, but was silent.

"What do you see?" faltered the girl.

"I see another suitor for Grace, a handsome gentleman, who has come over seas to woo and win her."

"Win her," echoed Hortense; "then he will win her."

"He will try," exclaimed the sibyl; "no stone will be left unturned; and the polished man of the world is thought to be more than a match for a fisherman's son! He came to me the night of his arrival; I suppose he would fain have my advice, my help, but this cup was red with blood; I could read no destiny save Mabel Ward's!"

"And has he been here since?"

"No, but I daily expect him."

"When he does seek your home, aid him if you can! Listen—I have wealth untold; I would give it all—nay, I sometimes think I would barter my hope of heaven to have Richard Crofton as wretched as I am! Ah! there is a rap at the door, have you not a back one!"

"Yes;" and the disguised girl and her companion made their exit at the same time that three or four maidens came fluttering in to consult the witch on their love-affairs.

Leaving them to their consultation with the fortune-teller, we will follow Hortense. On High Rock she stopped for an instant, fascinated by the magnificent panorama around her. Beneath lay the village of Lynn, with its clusters of buildings, the long beach, the precipitous Nahant cliffs, and the ledgy isle, on which those three men had held their guilty tryst; and the ocean, vast, blue, and fathomless. On the right rose Bunker Hill, not then marked by a column of granite, or hallowed by the blood of the brave; the town of Boston and the islands in the bay. Eastward might be seen the little hamlet of Swampscot, with its white beach and tapering masts; and away in the dim distance the headland of Cape Ann; while far to the northward rose the bold front of Wachuset. A few years ago I spent a summer on that cliff, and I never wearied of the prospect of sea and shore—a prospect which I have never found equalled elsewhere. Indeed, a tourist, who visited it while I was there, told me it reminded him of the "castled crags" which overhang the Rhine. What wonder was it then that even Hortense paused as her foot trod the cliff, and for an instant forgot her revengeful purposes. She might have tarried much longer had not her companion exclaimed:

"*Voila*, the little village of Swampscot!"

"Swampscot," echoed Hortense, shivering; "Where—where is it?"

Her friend pointed to the hamlet, and drawing her arm within her own, Hortense turned away.

Not long afterwards they concealed themselves near the fishing village, which still bears its Indian name. It is a beautiful place, and is "thought by travelers to have a strong resemblance to the Bay of Naples." The "great torch of Vesuvius" does not cast a lurid glare over the waters; but instead of the volcano there is to the west of Swampscot a crag, known as Black Will's Cliff, and on the east, dangerous rocks extending into the sea, to which somebody has given the appropriate name of Dread Ledge. The cottages were few and simple then, but one of them the quick eye of Hortense selected as Richard Crofton's house. The low walls were draped with woodbine, scarlet runners, and morning-glories; lilacs, laburnum and rose-bushes shaded the windows, and the garden not only stocked with a good supply of vegetables, but all aflame with marigolds, pinks and bright flowers, which had been brought from a sunnier clime. A pair of wood-pigeons had perched on the roof, and a great Newfoundland dog lay basking in the sunshine. In a few moments the door unclosed, and young Crofton came out with a slight figure clasped in his arms. The girl's face was beautiful as a poet's dream, but her limbs were crippled, and her brother bore her along as tenderly as if she had been a child. Some called her "poor Alice," but no skillful physiognomist, who could have looked into the depths of her untroubled, blue eyes, or watched the smile that came and went about her sweet mouth, would have thought she deserved the appellation. Alice the cripple was "an embodied peace," a blessing to her home, a blessing to all who came within the sphere of her influence.

"Alice," said her brother, "where shall I carry you?"

"It matters not if you are with me!"

"But you surely have some preference."

"I like to lie on the mossy rock yonder, and watch the waves on such a day as this."

The young man moved back into the house, and reappeared with a thick boat-cloak. Flinging it over the rock she had designated, he placed her in her favorite position, and while she fixed her calm, dreamy gaze on the waters, busied himself in mending one of his father's fishing nets. They had not been thus employed a half-hour, when they heard the trampling of horses' hoofs; both glanced around, and saw two equestrians riding along the smooth beach. One was a gentleman of gallant presence, clad in black velvet, and wearing the hat which was in vogue at that period, the three corners being fastened up with jet ornaments; his companion was a lady, young and matchlessly beautiful, arrayed in a black velvet riding-habit, and with a plumed cap set jauntily above a wealth of rich tresses. At sight of her, Crofton's cheek reddened, but he kept diligently at work, resolving that he would not be the first to recognize Grace Ward. The next moment, however, her sweet tones fell upon his ear.

"Cousin Ralph," she said earnestly, "that is Captain Crofton!"

"O, yes. Good-morning, sir," and he nodded with all the *hauteur* of a Heathcote. But the young Southern heiress drew rein, and bending from her saddle, held out her hand, exclaiming:

"I assure you this is a pleasant surprise; I did not know we were riding through Swampscot; but I am now very glad we did conclude to come this way, rather than gallop to Nahant."

Croften clasped her hand, and greeted her with what she had called his knightly grace of manner; and seeing that she was determined to stop, Heathcote was obliged to rein in his spirited Selim, though in his heart he wished Crofton at the antipodes. After the first salutation there was a brief silence, during which the heiress sat confusedly tapping her saddle with her gold-mounted riding-whip. Crofton, however, broke the painful pause by saying:

"I hope you are better than when I last saw you."

"Yes, I am—though poor Mabel's death is a terrible, terrible shock!" and her "slumbrous eyes" grew misty with tears.

"It must have been," resumed Crofton. "All the circumstances are such as to haunt her kindred like a hideous dream: the scene in the glen, the scene at her home, and the burial——"

"Hush!" interposed Heathcote, uneasily; "don't recall these things. We must always mourn for the dead, but I would fain have the awful details fade from my cousin's memory!"

"Perhaps it is best," said Crofton; and once more they relapsed into silence. At length the girl's restless gaze began to wander toward the cluster of bushes, and she faltered:

"I—I believe you live in this hamlet."

"Yes."

"And now I'll wager that I can select your house."

"You may at least try."

"'Tis the pretty cottage yonder, half buried in vines and flowers, with the wood-pigeons on the roof, and the dog keeping watch in front."

Richard Crofton smiled.

"You are right," he exclaimed. "You must be a veritable sorceress."

"Perhaps," suggested Heathcote, "she has obtained a portion of old Moll's power."

"No—oh, no," rejoined Grace, shaking her pretty head with the vivacity she had inherited from her mother, and which had been crushed down by the great sorrow which had just fallen upon her; "I arrived at my conclusion by no magical process; but I have seen enough of Captain Crofton to know that, if he had an inch of land, it would blossom like a parterre, and if he had a house, it would be covered with vines."

"You pay him a rare compliment," said Heathcote.

"It is no compliment, but the truth; I never descend to flattery."

The young sailor's cheek again reddened, his eyes kindled, his lip quivered, but he did not speak. Grace rode a few paces farther, and then returned, and stopping close to his side, asked:

"Pray, who is that girl who sits on the rock?"

"My sister——"

"What!" interposed Grace, "the crippled sister, to whom you were bringing the parrot I tended when on board the Petrel?"

"Yes."

"Good Heavens, how lovely she is! She looks like the pictures of the Madonna which so often smiled down upon me when in Catholic countries. May I speak to her?"

"O, certainly—ride up the bank;" and he took her bridle-rein, and led her horse to the rock, on which Alice was yet reclining.

"Alice," he murmured, "this lady wishes to be introduced to you—Miss Grace Ward, little sister."

At the sound of that name the invalid started, her fair face flushed, and a smile of strange sweetness rippled about her delicately chiselled lips.

"I have heard so much of you that I feel quite well acquainted," said the heiress, bending from her saddle. "Nay, nay—do not try to rise. Don't stand on ceremony with me. What a pleasant seat you have! Suppose I share it a few moments. Captain Crofton, may I trouble you to assist me in dismounting?"

The young man lifted her from the saddle, and seating herself beside the invalid, she chatted with all the abandon of a child.

"You lead a happy life, in spite of your lameness," she said, glancing at the placid face of the young cripple.

"I never grieve, save when there is a great storm, and I know Richard is in danger, and then I pray God to bring him safely back to me, if it is His will."

Again the Southern girl's eyes filled with tears.

"Captain Crofton," she murmured, "you are blest in having such a mediator! Perhaps it was in answer to her prayers that the Petrel outrode the tempest, which was fatal to so many."

"I trust it was—I hope I am thankful for a sister like Alice."

"Indeed you ought to be; I have neither sister nor brother, and both my parents are dead."

"But you have friends," said the crippled girl: "one so beautiful is never without friends."

With a sudden impulse Grace stooped and kissed the speaker.

"It is sweet to have your good opinion," she replied, "for I know you would pay no idle compliments."

"Cousin Grace," called Heathcote, "it is growing late. Your uncle is the soul of punctuality, and he will berate me soundly if I do not bring you home to dinner in good season!"

"I will come in a few minutes," rejoined Grace, taking out a watch of exquisite workmanship. "I must go," she added; "but I cannot leave till I inquire for the parrot I commenced taming for you."

"O, he is doing finely. He knows his own name, and has astonished us by repeating mine and Richard's."

"I taught him those," replied Grace, with a blush. "I should be glad to see Rocco."

"He is in the house. If you would go in with us, you could have that pleasure."

"O! I should like it of all things."

Richard Crofton took his sister in his arms, and Grace followed, holding up the ample folds of her rich riding-dress.

"It is but a lowly home," murmured Crofton, as he ushered her into the cottage.

"But it is a delightful one—much pleasanter, I do declare, than Uncle Ward's great, gloomy, old house."

At this moment a sharp, shrill voice cried:

"Rocco—Richard—Alice!"

"That's the bird," exclaimed the lame girl.

"O, yes—he proved an apt scholar. Let me see if he remembers old friends as well;" and Grace moved forward, and unfastening the cage-door, held up the white, jewelled hand, from which she had just drawn her black gauntlet. The bird perched upon it, and as she drew him out of the cage, arched his glossy neck in extreme satisfaction, and rehearsed the names she had taught him, for her benefit.

"Ah, good Rocco," she exclaimed, "you know me. I must teach you another lesson—say Grace—Grace!"

"Yes, say Grace," chimed in the soothing, coaxing voice of Alice.

"Now be a clever bird," resumed the Southern girl; "tell me what visitor has come to pet Rocco."

"Grace," responded the parrot.

"There—there," said the maiden, joyfully. "Don't let him forget it. I shall come again to see if he remembers!"

"Pray, do," murmured Alice, and her brother's eyes seconded the invitation.

Placing the lame girl in a low chair, which she could wheel about the house, the young captain escorted Grace back to her cousin. Heathcote had dismounted, and as Grace approached, he greeted her with a courtly bow. The next instant both were in their saddles. As they dashed away, the heiress turned and waved her handkerchief to Crofton, and during the remainder of the ride she was silent and abstracted.

When Grace Ward and Heathcote were out of sight, Crofton resumed his work, but in a dreamy mood. The voice of Grace still lingered in his ears; her face, framed in masses of glossy hair, haunted him; and when he went into the cottage on some errand, his gaze dwelt long and fondly on the spot where she had stood caressing the parrot. Alice yet held the bird, and he was going through his brief *repertoire*—"Rocco, Alice, Richard, Grace."

"Grace," echoed the fair cripple; "'tis a sweet name—a sweet name—you mustn't forget it! I am sure I never shall forget the young stranger. O, Richard, is she not beautiful!"

"She is, indeed," was the low reply.

"And good as she is beautiful?"

"I believe so."

The little maiden expatiated awhile on the visit of the stranger, and then put the bird back in his cage, and took up her knitting. Her brother moved from the house, but he could not work, and flinging himself down on the rock where Grace had sat with Alice, he dreamed the wild dreams which, sooner or later, weave their spell round every heart. Suddenly a voice broke in upon his musings, and he encountered the gaze of Moll Pitcher.

"Why do you loiter here?" she exclaimed. "Why do you waste the summer day in idle dreams?"

Before the young man could summon strength to reply, she continued:

"Aye! I know—Richard Crofton, you are in love—in love, though perhaps you have not yet acknowledged it even to your own soul! Ever since you saved Grace Ward from death, her image has haunted you—the lone night-watch at sea, the solitude of your quiet home, have been cheered by visions of her beauty, her grace, and the thousand charms I need not enumerate. Her perilous voyage with you, your meeting beside her murdered kindred in the Pirate's Glen, her wild appeal to you in that extremity, and this visit to Swampscot beach have served to deepen the impression! Young man, what have you to say?"

"I respect Miss Ward," responded Crofton, after a brief pause.

Moll smiled, as she said, significantly:

"You need not, however, make me your confessor; I have read many a heart in my day—read yours, search it well, and see whether my accusation is false or true! We shall meet again ere long, and then I will ask you if Moll Pitcher was not right."

The next moment she was gone, but her words lingered with the young sailor. His cheek flushed, and his lips quivered as he muttered:

"I never asked her to tell my fortune; she has come unsought to warn me. I don't think it best to try to know more of the future than God reveals—to seek such aid as she pretends to offer in love affairs, but it can do me no harm to search my heart as she bade me!"

As he spoke, he buried his face in his hands, and sat for some time in silence. In that hour Richard Crofton communed with himself, and at last he said, aloud:

"Why does her step, her voice, her lightest look thrill me so? Why do I dream of her by night and by day? Ah! I do love her—love her with all the strength and fervor of my young manhood! Moll had to find my secret, ere I had dared lisp it in solitude. Could I win this beautiful Southern girl—I, the son of a Swampscot fisherman? She lavishes a thousand attentions upon me, but she doubtless does it out of mere gratitude! She is rich, vastly rich, and I poor; she is a born aristocrat, and I a plebeian—'twould be madness to think of her! I fancy I can see how her proud lip would curl with scorn if it were hinted that Dick Crofton dared love her!"

The young man paused, and for a time stood there, with a fierce tide of anguish sweeping over him. At last his face grew rigid with some stern purpose, and he said, hoarsely:

"She shall not have a chance to trifle with me; I will keep my own counsel; I will not put myself in her way; I will meet all her kindness with simple courtesy."

"You have spoken well," exclaimed a voice, which broke sharply in upon the young man's musings; "there are others who would give the wide world, if they possessed it, to be called Richard Crofton's wife!"

He started, but nobody of his acquaintance was to be seen; the only persons in sight were two sailor youths, who were putting off from a sheltered cove just beneath the rock on which he sat. Ah! one of them was the disguised Hortense, who had been lurking about all the afternoon, and could not resist the temptation of speaking when she heard his words. But Crofton supposed it must have been Moll, who had a habit of prowling round, and surprising people out of their secrets. Vexed with himself for having thought aloud, as he termed it, he searched for her wherever there was a chance for her to hide, but her lithe form, pale face and burning eyes did not rise before him again that night.

"Can it be," he resumed, "can it be she has the power of speaking thus when she is absent? No, no, I will not believe it, but 'tis very strange, very strange!"

He moved into the house, where the evening meal was in readiness, and tried to banish the image of Grace, but in vain. Supper ended, he bade Alice bring her book, and recite her lesson as usual.

"Perhaps—perhaps you do not feel like hearing it."

"No, it is always a pleasure to have you near me. Come," and he drew her to her accustomed seat on his knee, while she opened the book.

"Love is either the bane or the blessing of our lives," read Alice, and then she paused, and looked into her brother's eyes, which were, alas! troubled.

"You heard that," she resumed; "I believe it."

"So do I," responded her brother.

"O, Richard," moaned the maiden, "to-day has unlocked your heart! You love Grace, the beautiful Grace, whose presence yet seems to warm and brighten our cottage."

The young man did not speak, but his sudden flush, his tremor were eloquent.

"You do not deny it," continued Alice.

"No, I acknowledge it, but you are the only human being who will hear me confess it! You will keep my secret, little Alice."

"I will," and her quivering lips touched his brow and cheek in yearning fondness.

"I shall always have you, Alice," exclaimed Richard; "you must be my fireside treasure. As for her, I shall shun her henceforth—I never mean to go to her uncle's again!"

"But you must once, at least."

"And why?"

"While she was here she dropped this," and the girl held up a gold ring all ablaze with diamonds.

Crofton seized it with an eagerness that told how dear was even an ornament she had worn, and turned it round and round on his finger.

"Is it very valuable?" queried the unsophistocated Alice.

"Those jewels are diamonds, little girl; they must have cost enough to support us a year."

"Then she will be anxious when she misses it."

"Yes, I must hasten to restore the gewgaw! Good-night—I shall be back early, but you must not sit up for me."

With these words, Richard Crofton put on his hat, and taking a stout cane, left the cottage. The moon had risen, and rode high above banks of clouds, still faintly tinged with sunset hues, and a few stars had lit their watch-fires in the sky; but for the first time Nature had lost her charm for the young man. With rapid strides he stalked on till he stood on the flight of granite steps, leading to Captain Ward's door. In answer to his summons a servant appeared.

"Is Miss Grace Ward within?" asked Crofton.

"Yes," was the laconic answer.

"Have you heard her say that she lost anything during her ride to-day?"

"I guess I have; she's makin' a great touse 'bout a ring she missed when she took off her gloves."

"My sister found it, please give it to her immediately." He was about to turn away when somebody said:

"Hark, that must be Captain Crofton's voice!"

In another instant Grace glided into the hall, and perceiving him, hastened to meet him. Her eyes lighted up, and a slight blush rose to her white forehead.

"I have come," said Crofton, "to bring you a ring that Alice found in our kitchen after you left."

"O, I am very, very glad to find it, not so much on account of its intrinsic value, as because it was my mother's betrothal ring. Thank you, thank you for your trouble—come in, will you not?"

The young man declined with courtesy, adding that he must go back to Alice.

"Alice, your sweet sister Alice," murmured the girl, "I do not wonder she is dear to you. Take this to her, and tell her it is the gift of one who hopes she will love, and pray for her." She drew off a ring, set with pearls, and held it out.

"I hardly know," said Crofton, "whether Alice ought to accept so costly a gift."

"Grace Ward may surely bestow presents as she wishes—there is nobody to question her right and I beseech you not to let your scruples rise between me and Alice. Do you know, Sir Richard Crofton, that I am the soul of perverseness? If you refuse, I shall send it over by Sambo."

"Well, I will take it then," replied the young man, catching a little of her playful mood; "but how am I to carry it—'tis too small for aught save fairy fingers, and if I put it in my pocket, I shall be sure to crush it, and thus bring down upon myself your indignation."

With a half-serious, half-coquettish air, Grace raised his hand, and tried to slip the ring over the hard, brown fingers. At length she succeeded in forcing it to the first joint of the fourth, and bade him be careful lest he should mar, or lose it.

As he descended the steps, she re-opened the door, and cried:

"Don't let the bird forget me!"

"Well," muttered Crofton, "Providence has sent me across her path once more. I did not mean to see her. I fully intended to leave the ring with the porter, but she in her condescension thwarted me. Condescension—it can be nothing more—nothing more. I will take no encouragement from what has just passed. Be still, heart! you shall not make me either a fool or a villain!"

That night, when Richard Crofton stood on the hearth of his lowly home, displaying the Southern girl's gift to the delighted Alice, Hortense L'Estrange, disguised as a sailor, crept into the little hut where Antoine was watching for her. She sank into a seat, and tossing up her arms with a frantic gesture, shrieked:

"Antoine, Antoine, I shall go mad!"

"What has happened? Tell me, oh, tell me!" and the old man sprang to her side.

"Antoine, my suspicions are confirmed! I went to Moll Pitcher's, and she told me Richard Crofton loves Grace Ward. Lured on by a wild impulse, I sought his home. I had not been there long, when she came riding along the sands, with her cousin, Ralph Heathcote. Of course she pretended she didn't know he lived there, but that was a *ruse!*" and she proceeded to relate what she had seen and heard there, and in the evening, when he restored the ring. Antoine listened, interrupting her with many a French exclamation of anger and surprise, and tried to console her, not with wise counsel, but with hopes of a terrible revenge.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

A HEART OF GOLD.

BY MARY W. STANLEY GIBSON.

What must it be? No shining toy—but a real human heart, beating in a human breast, and warmed by the fire of a human love. Patient, loyal, brave, magnanimous, gentle, noble, and above all, faithful and affectionate; never wronging its enemy, never betraying its friend, or denying the power and the mercy of its God. Who has met with such an one? Question hard and difficult for most to answer, yet not for me.

I found one when I least expected, and where the blue billows of the great ocean were around me. I found it guiding the course of a gallant bark—the dainty "Ariel," that did *our* "spiriting most gently," and wafted us from the shores of the new country to those of the old, as if it had the wings of a bird. It was a homelike place—that pretty little steamer, and I loved every inch of it from stem to stern, for the sake of the twelve happy days that were more like weeks, and the dear friends that shared them as we crossed the sea. But now—but now—oh I feel as if I never could bear to see the ship again—and the sunlight of memory in my mind is obscured by a cloud of horror, and a great darkness which can be seen and felt.

A heart of gold. Ah yes—we had one beating there among us all the time. It prompted the careful eye and hand of the gallant Captain, who held us all in his charge; it was the fountain from which sprung all those graceful acts of kindness that made our floating prison such a nest of ease and comfort. How well I remember him standing like a monarch on the deck, telescope in hand, as we came up the channel, while two gay girls were trying to snatch it from him, that they "might see England before any one else did." The grave, but kindly face, the deeply shadowed eyes, the curling beard, sunbrowned cheek, and soft black hair—the stalwart form, encased in a loose pea jacket, as the night came on and the wind rose—strong hand and gentle voice—ah I can scarce believe that the old happy days are over—I *cannot* feel that what I have since heard is true.

How that good ship, meeting with many an accident as she sailed to and fro, and always saved by his prudence and foresight, has at last met with something worse than all, and even while I am writing these words, has sailed into the harbor of New York, bearing the dead body of her commander to his home, and to those who will mourn him so deeply there! I have written the words—I have read them in plain type, and yet I cannot make it real. It seems but a day since a brief, cheery dispatch lay before me, telling of a longer one which was to "come from home"—and will that letter never be written now? Will there be no more welcomes or farewells as the vessel comes and goes—no more prayers asked or given while she sails upon the sea—no more good wishes clustering around him and his unknown home, like guardian angels keeping all from harm? Oh can it be that while I, and others far dearer to him, slept peacefully upon our beds, the storm arose, and he, with perhaps a thought of us, even in his last agony, was swept away to stand before his Judge? Oh heart of gold, mayst thou find mercy in His eyes—may He remember the good, and pardon the evil thou hast done!

I sit in my study alone, and recall our brief friendship, and think of and pray for those upon whom the blow falls far heavier than upon me. God keep the widow and the fatherless as the apple of his eye, and give them that comfort which the world can never give! They have lost more than I, and yet my heart is very sore. I mourn for the noble and the true, for one who never failed or deceived me—who was kind and gentle and forbearing from first to last, even when tried by caprice of seeming unkindness, almost beyond endurance.

"Green be the turf above thee, friend of my better days;
None knew thee but to love thee, or named thee but to praise."

I sit this evening, and think of a sea which is more profound than the wide Atlantic, and where the "Ariel" may never sail. I think how fair and calm it lies in a region where no trouble ever comes, and where the light fails not; I hear its hollow murmur against a silvery beach; I see the gardens of a glorious country on its shores, and the mountains that environ the city of the Blest; and I pray, oh with my whole heart, that my lost friend may meet me there one day—my friend and all who were dear to him—when earth shall have done with us, and we with earth, and God shall have wiped away all tears—such tears as are falling now—forever!

BEAUTY AND MANHOOD BEFORE DRESS.

We do not undervalue wealth—it is the great sign and tribute to labor somewhere, and therefore honorable; but inasmuch as there is no intrinsic nobleness in a stamped coin, we cannot do it homage, while the slightest claim of our humanity is tenfold more important. Let us, then, as we go forth amongst our kind, so appear *that the purse shall not be lifted up as the sign of worship.* A lady is such by the very construction of her bones and muscles, by the nerves of her body, and the texture of her mind; she does not need the touch of the dressmaker, nor the stamp of a coin to distinguish her as such. She does not need to flaunt her advantages on the highway—she does not need to claim immunities because of her beauty, even. Prettiness is so common that it ceases to please; while the deep sentiment of a higher manifestation is so subtle and so all-pervading, that no woman need be vain over even a large endowment; and as it goes onward from grace of form to nobleness of feature, still onward to where the soul breathes in the face, and we feel ourselves nearest the Divine, in every stage there are beings prepared to recognize it, and to grow into love and worship. Let us look the absurdities of the prevailing mode full in the face, and challenge a reform. Let us look our own ambition in the face, and grow more true to our humanity. Let us reject the cumbersome and the petty articles of dress that make us listless and uncomfortable, and fret our tempers and impair our beauty. They belittle and annoy us, and heaven knows we do not need the aid of such things in life to give us discomfort. If we must be martyrs, let us be so in a great cause, and not for tape and buttons.

INTO THE DARKNESS.

BY MARY FORREST.

Into the darkness we all must go,
Shadow and sunshine—forward and fro!
Out of the noontide's golden glow
Into the midnight's stygian flow:
Out of the joylight into the woe,
Out of the transport into the throe—
Shadow and sunshine—forward and fro!

He who climbs the mountain's height
And sets his eye to the larger light,
Must dare the fiery blinding flash
And pale not at the thunder crash.

The dark and dangerous ravine
Is found the grandest peaks between,
And Death's appalling shadow lies
Close by the gates of Paradise.

An angel's scope of ecstasy
Is but an arch above a sea
Within whose dim, unsounded deeps
Supernal power of anguish sleeps.

The pang each yearning bosom feels
Full well its vanished joy reveals,
And only by the shadow cast
We gauge the truest light at last.

A DETECTIVE TAKEN IN.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

Our readers may remember the circumstance of the arrest, some eight or ten years ago, of a band of counterfeiters in Canada, and of the capture of a marvellous quantity of tools and implements of the nefarious craft. It may have been over ten years ago, though I am inclined to think it was at a later date. However, the newspapers were full of the startling intelligence at the time, and as my story does not depend for its interest or truthfulness upon the exact date, we will not be particular. And, furthermore, if Mr. Sharp should see this bit of gossipping history, I beg that he will not blame me for having written it. He will observe that I have kept his real name out of sight; and so, if he keeps his own counsel, the uninitiated will be none the wiser touching his share in the transaction.

In that other time of which I have spoken the business community of New England was startled by the appearance of new and dangerous counterfeit bank notes. They came, no one could tell whence; but they came in great quantities; and ere long nearly every trader in the country had suffered in the possession of one or more of these bogus promises-to-pay. The flood of counterfeits increased as the weeks passed on, and so nicely executed were they that people began to lose their confidence in all kinds of bank paper.

At this stage of the game it became necessary for the banks to step in and do something; and they did it—they did it for their own salvation. They came together by their representatives, and formed an association for the purpose of breaking up counterfeiting then and in all coming time; and in the hands of an elected commission was left the business of employing such means as might be necessary to the end in view. Intelligence had been received which rendered it certain that the counterfeits were manufactured somewhere in Canada; and after a deal of inquiry and patient investigation, the bank commission not only became assured that Canada was the point of issue, but they also obtained the names of some dozen suspected men against whom the evidence was at least strong enough to warrant their apprehension.

But now, how should these men be found? Of course the work must needs be carried on carefully and shrewdly, for counterfeiters are much like crows—they must be approached so stealthily that the springing of the trap shall precede the alarm.

Away up in Maine lived an old deputy-sheriff named Ralph Barnum, who had had some experience in such matters, and it was suggested to the commission that they should employ him; but they fancied they knew better. They wanted no *countryman* to blunder in their work. They had their eye upon the very man. Mr. Samuel Sharp was a policeman of the city, and such marvellous stories had he told of his exploits in capturing rogues that his fame had reached the ears of the commission, and he was fixed upon as the agent who should bring the hidden places of the counterfeiters to light. Mr. Sharp was a gentleman, and, perhaps, a scholar; and it was fancied that he could travel over the road without its being suspected that he was an officer. At all events, Mr. Sharp was engaged to do the work; and he was accordingly furnished with money for the trip, and also with the names of the suspected parties. This last item was a very important one, and the policeman determined to make the most of it. With such information to start upon he felt sure of success—so sure, that he told his employers they might depend upon him. Written down in a little book he had the names of a dozen men who were known to be great rogues; who had been seen in Canada within a month; and who were furthermore known to have had some hand in issuing the bogus notes. The thing was now to find their lurking place; get possession of their tools and implements and stock in trade, and bring the villains to justice.

Mr. Samuel Sharp said he could do it. He said he *would* do it. He had a clue to the whereabouts of the rascals, and they could not escape him. He took the rail as far as that would carry him on his way, and then took the stage. At Derby, close by the Canada line, he stopped to make his final arrangements. He was sure that his game was not far away—not many miles over the line—and he determined to approach it very carefully. On the following morning he took the stage which was to carry him into Canada; and, as the day was fine, he rode upon the box with the driver. This driver was a jolly, loquacious individual, and soon learned from his passenger that he, the said passenger, was simply travelling for his health and amusement. At noon they stopped for dinner at a small settlement, and in the afternoon Mr. Sharp had come to like the jolly driver exceedingly well,—so much so that he laughed and joked about the peculiar institutions of the country.

"I have heard," said he, "that you have a good many sharp rogues in Canada; and, if it is all true that has been told to me, you must be more than a match for the Yankees."

The driver laughed, and in a joking way claimed that his people were really over-burdened with honesty.

"But," suggested Mr. Sharp, "they do a little keen horse-trading once in a while?"

"When they can do it honorably," replied Jehu, with a wink.

"And," pursued the detective, in a careless manner, "I have heard that a goodly share of the bogus bank notes come from Canada."

"I've heard such stuff myself; but I don't believe it. I never took but one bogus note, and that I got in Vermont. I guess you Yankees make the most o' that."

And so they rattled on till night, when the stage stopped at a small inn, where Mr. Sharp engaged lodgings. He did not speak for a seat in the coach for the next morning, for he imagined that he must be already in the neighborhood of his game. It might be some miles away, but, in all probability, not on the line of the stage route. So he told the landlord that he might stop with him for several days, at the same time intimating that he might also want a horse and carriage to ride around and view the country.

In a little while after this the landlord and the jolly stage-driver were closeted together in a back-room.

"Who is that chap?" asked the landlord.

"He's a *poke!*" emphatically replied the jolly stage-driver. "He's come up here to look after our folks. He aint no pleasure-hunter; but he's a bogus huntin'. He talked about bogus money."

"Aha!" said the landlord. "I thought so."

"But," pursued the jolly stage-driver, "that aint all. That aint half. He asked me if I'd ever heard tell of such a man as Bill Sawtell; and not long afterwards he wanted to know if I ever heard of a horse-trader named John Downer. In course I never heard of any such chaps. But what does he want of Bill Sawtell and Jack Downer? How did he know there was such men?"

"Aha!" said the landlord.

"He must be watched," said the jolly stage-driver.

"Aha! Leave him to me!" added the landlord. "Leave him to me!"

In ten minutes from that time a sharp-witted, quiet-mannered boy was put upon Mr. Samuel Sharp's track, with directions to watch his every movement, and report.

After tea Mr. Sharp sat down upon the piazza, and having convinced himself that he was alone, took the little book from his pocket, and looked over the names he had there written down.

Now it so happened that Mr. Samuel Sharp was leaning his back against the sill of a window, the blinds of which were closed, and it further happened that within the little parlor stood the boy, peering down between the slats of said blinds, directly upon the afore-mentioned book. By and by Mr. Sharp put up his book and walked away, and the boy went to report. He, the boy, found the landlord and the jolly stage-driver in the back room, and he told them what he had seen. He had seen the book in the stranger's hands, and he had read a lot of names that were written down there. He had read the name of Bill Sawtell, and the name of John Downer, and the name of Dennis McKnight, and some eight or ten more, which he called over, and which the landlord recognized as belonging to very particular friends of his.

"Aha!" said mine host, "I begin to smell!"

"Oho!" echoed the jolly stage-driver; "that's his game, eh?"

In the evening the landlord went into the bar-room, and found the overcoat of his guest hanging upon a peg. It was a light, loose sack, which Mr. Samuel Sharp wore as a "duster." Mine host took the garment down, and carried it away, and having ripped open the collar, and examined its make and quality, he packed in a little extra stiffening, and then sewed it up as it should be, after which he carried the coat back, and hung it up where he found it.

On the following morning, after Mr. Samuel Sharp had eaten his breakfast, and smoked a cigar, he proposed that he would take a ride. He said he might ride on to the next town, and if he did, he should not be back before night. The landlord didn't mind that. He furnished the team, as desired, and expressed his willingness that the guest should ride whither he pleased.

In about an hour after Mr. Sharp had gone, the landlord and the jolly stage-driver bestirred themselves. They hunted up a justice and an officer, and lodged a complaint against one Samuel Sharp, said complaint setting forth that said Sharp was an issuer of counterfeit money. The justice issued a writ, and the officer started off to serve it, the landlord and the jolly stage-driver bearing him company. They overtook Mr. Sharp just as he drove up to the door of the inn at the next town, and the officer arrested him at once, and took him into the parlor, where a large number of curious people were soon gathered.

"Good heavens, gentlemen, what do you mean?" cried Mr. Sharp. "*Me* a counterfeiter!"

"Oho," returned the jolly stage-driver, "don't try none o' that on us. I took the measure on you when you was on my stage. I marked what you said. Oho, you was a leetle too leaky, old feller. That was a bogus bill as you passed on me."

Mr. Sharp was astounded. He knew that he had said something to the jolly driver about counterfeiting, but he had no idea that it could have been turned against him.

"I must search your person," said the officer.

"Certainly," replied the detective.

During this operation the landlord suggested that counterfeiters sometimes hid bogus money away in strange places.

"Oho, that's so," said the jolly stage-driver; and thereupon a more thorough search was commenced.

"Aha! What's this?"

It was something peculiar in the feeling of the collar of the over-sack. The officer out with his knife, and ripped it open, when, lo and behold, the evidence was in sight! Within that collar, very nicely packed away between the cloth and the lining, they found eight thousand dollars of counterfeit money!

Mr. Samuel Sharp stood aghast, and knew not what to say; and when he did speak, his words were only taken as so much more evidence of his guilt. In short, Sharp was fully committed, and marched away to jail, while the lookers-on went about their business; the accommodating landlord and the jolly stage-driver returning to look out for the next detective that might happen along.

Mr. Samuel Sharp remained in jail eight-and-forty hours, and then managed to gain an interview with the high sheriff. He told his story so plainly and directly, and had such documentary evidence to show, that he soon convinced the sheriff that he was really an officer in the pursuit of duty, and that a rascally trick had been played upon him. The sheriff saw through the matter at length, and concluded that the prisoner might be set at liberty.

"Of course," he said, "I cannot give you liberty at present by any legal process; but, under the circumstances, I am willing to take a great responsibility. If you will give me your word that you will return at once to your home, and not remain around here, I will persuade the jailer to let you make your escape this night."

Mr. Sharp accepted the offer with many thanks. That night he found the door of the jail open; and, before the light of another morning, he was beyond the line, in Vermont. He reached his home, and made his report; and it was the conclusion of the bank commission that Mr. Samuel Sharp was not sharp enough for that sort of business.

The next step was to send to Maine for Ralph Barnum; and in due time Mr. Ralph Barnum made his appearance. He said he would go in quest of the rogues, and his terms were as follows: In addition to the pay he demanded for his time, he demanded the right to expend as much money on the account of his employers as he wished. He promised that he would keep a fair account of every dollar thus expended. If he wished to buy a horse, a horse he must buy; and if he wanted to buy an ox, an ox he must buy. And, if he wanted a hundred horses, or a hundred oxen, he must have the means to purchase. Only, he promised that he would be as careful as possible, and purchase that which would readily sell again.

The commission finally consented to this, and Mr. Barnum went his way. Just imagine a middle-aged, red-faced man, with an honest, jolly look; standing six feet and four inches in his stockings, and weighing nearly three hundred pounds, and you have the idea of Ralph Barnum. In the garb of an old cattle drover he made his way into Canada, and commenced at once to examine all the best stock, occasionally buying, as his fancy seemed to be suited. In this way he spent a month, in the very neighborhood where Mr. Samuel Sharp had been operated upon, and at the end of that time he was master of every secret he desired to know; and yet so carefully had he kept his own counsel, and so persistently had he followed his professed calling, that his real intent was not suspected. In the end the train was laid, the force made ready, and the trap sprung.

As I said at first, those who read the newspapers of the time, cannot have forgotten the result. It was the largest and most important haul of counterfeiters and counterfeiting implements ever made in this country. And, in closing, I may add, that conspicuous among the prisoners were the accommodating landlord and the jolly stage-driver.

A LESSON IN LIFE.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"I will stop, now," said Mr. Fanshaw, at forty-five, pausing in his life-work, and looking back over the broad fields through which he had been reaping for years, and then at his barns and store-houses, that were filled to overflowing. "Having enough and to spare, why toil on, eagerly and anxiously, for more? Having borne the burden and heat of the day, why not accept the rest that a liberal competence offers? Let others work now, my part is done. If I add to the wealth already accumulated, can I enter more into its enjoyment? Then why strive on? No; I will stop now, and take the good life has to offer. Only a few years remain to me at best, why waste them in this dull round of simple money-making?"

Mr. Fanshaw was a philosopher, in his own estimation. He pondered this view of the case at intervals, which grew briefer and briefer, seeing it in a stronger and stronger light, until the proposition was fully accepted, and he calmly arranged to withdraw from all active participation in business. With the very first step in this arrangement came a shadow of misgiving. Then he went all over the argument by which he had been influenced to retire from active life, but could discover no flaw therein. He had ample wealth, yielding an income beyond what, even in luxurious living, he could spend. Why, then, dig and delve? Why gather in more, and lay it up for others to scatter? Why waste his energies for naught?

Mr. Fanshaw regarded the argument as conclusive, and notwithstanding the shadow of misgiving which, at the very first movement, crept over his feelings, he walked steadily to the result in view. It took him over a year to get disentangled from the many business connexions in which he was involved, during all of which time that faint shadow kept growing more and more palpable, and when, at last, freed from cares and duties, he sat down in the sunshine of his prosperity to simply enjoy, he could perceive little or no warmth in that sunshine. He looked up, doubting and questioning, into the sky that bent over him. It was not blue, and bright, and sparkling to the eye, but had a kind of leaden dullness that left its hue upon his feelings. A strange unrest began to disturb his spirit. Wearily the days passed, and the nights became more and more sleepless.

"Go into the country," said a friend, who saw, in the face and manner of Mr. Fanshaw, the evidences of a growing life-weariness. "Build yourself a handsome villa, and surround it with all the charms of nature made more beautiful by art."

But Mr. Fanshaw had no taste for rural life or landscape gardening. His mind had received no cultivation in that direction; and there were no early associations to draw him back to woods and fields. A city boy, he had grown up among city scenes, and the city's hard features were stamped upon him. For over twenty-five years all interest had been absorbed in bales and boxes of goods; in stocks and bills; in mortgages, bonds and money securities. And now, that he no longer cared for these things, what came in to take their places, and hold his restless thoughts?

"Visit Europe," suggested another friend, who saw the growing discontent of Mr. Fanshaw.

This was conned over. A year in London, Paris, Florence and Rome looked promising. He went, and enjoyed to the degree a man of his education and habits of life is capable of enjoying; but found the annoyances incident to travelling abroad in excess of the pleasure. So he came home, to find home drearier than when he went away. There was a time when Mr. Fanshaw enjoyed the daily newspaper; but then he took a lively interest in cotton and grain, and the price of leading stocks. Political affairs had also a certain attraction; for the political world was in close connexion with the business world. He moved about, too, among live men, all on the alert, like himself, and ambition, as well as interest, kept him posted in common affairs, so as to stand their equals. But now he had ruled himself out of the current movements of the day, and gradually losing the "run of things," lost the old desire for his newspaper—no, we err—not the old desire, but the old enjoyment. The newspaper was resorted to as before, with a certain pleasurable anticipation; but rarely did its columns yield the honey he would find. Dry and unprofitable all. Daily the sheet was thrown aside in disappointment.

Out of the live current Mr. Fanshaw was moving in a small, sluggish eddy, round and round. Vitality was departing every day. Mind was growing weaker through an impotent exhaustion of itself; and as it grew weaker it grew unhappier. Plainly, Mr. Fanshaw had made a mistake in retiring from business. So one ventured to say.

"I know that," was his answer. "I didn't understand myself."

"Go into business again," was suggested.

But Mr. Fanshaw shook his head, answering, "No; I am out of the current, and have not the boldness to venture in again. Nearly three years of idleness have reduced the old vigor of mind. I feel that I should be unequal to the requirements. A business life, as the world goes now, is a different thing from floating with the tide. There is no success but for those who strain every muscle pulling against the stream."

And this was the simple truth. Ease, idleness, and loss of mental vigor through sluggishness of mind, had robbed Mr. Fanshaw of strength to such a degree that he dared not venture again out upon the waters where he had once held his place among the boldest and most vigorous.

Two years more of a fruitless life, and then, without warning, down from a summer sky fell a desolating storm, sweeping from hundreds and thousands, all over the land, the gathered wealth of years. While it raged, a bolt struck the fair edifice which Mr. Fanshaw had builded, and it fell in hopeless ruin to the ground. Of all its goodly stones, scarcely one remained unbroken or in its place.

Stunned at first; then appalled by the disaster; and then quickened into a fearful sense of his helplessness and hopelessness, Mr. Fanshaw's first state of mind was one of bitter complaints. He called this misfortune a hard and cruel dispensation; and when a wiser one than himself drew near, and sought to lift his thoughts into a purer atmosphere, where he could see stars shining in the midnight sky, he rejected his offered words of instruction, and called God cruel and unjust.

"Nay, my friend, say not so," was answered. "God is good, and just, and wise. Out of this darkness He will, in His own good time, I trust, bring you into marvelous light. His ways are not as our ways, but they lead upwards; He sees not as we see; but in His purposes are eternal felicity. I think that He has work for you yet in this world, Mr. Fanshaw; work that only your hands can aright perform."

But Mr. Fanshaw rejected the proposition. Worldly wealth had been the greatest good in his eyes. Through long years he had toiled for it, with an unabating ardor. And now, it was swept from his grasp.

It so happened that, a few days afterwards, Mr. Fanshaw was in the house of this wiser friend, to whom, in remembrance of warm expression of interest and sympathy, he had come again, moved by the bitterness of a state that began searching about for relief. While they sat talking, a child was engaged in building a toy castle. He had blocks of all sizes and shapes, adapted to his purpose, and steadily rose wall and buttress, tower and battlement, growing under his hand in symmetry, fitness, and beauty into what seemed in his eyes like a very creation of his will, until the goodly edifice was completed.

The friend called Mr. Fanshaw's attention to the child, and they observed, with interest, the entire cheerful absorption of his mind in what he was doing, each well-considered piece going into its place to the murmur of a song that issued in a continuous flow from his lips.

"He is building, as men build," said the friend, "happy in his work. The mental activity required, gives an exhilarant tone to his feelings, and he sings as he toils."

At last, the castle was completed, and the child stood and surveyed it, now looking from one point of view and now from another, and now walking round and round.

"Observe," said the friend; "he is silent now. No music is floating through his lips. The work is done; and he is beholding it with satisfaction—but is he as happy in contemplating his work as he was in doing it?"

After a few minutes the child ceased inspecting his castle from all sides, and going to a sofa, threw himself thereon with a sigh that went audibly through the room. There he lay, for some time, listlessly, but with his eyes upon his finished work. Then he manifested signs of restlessness; got up and walked around his goodly edifice again—sighed, and went to the farther end of the room—then came back, and renewed the inspection. But he did not sing any more.

"Do you understand the case?" asked the friend.

Mr. Fanshaw had a dawning perception of its meaning; yet answered with a shake of the head.

"The child's experiences are the man's, in miniature. He is growing restless for lack of employment. Most earnestly his thought went into the construction of that castle, and he looked to the beautiful form he was creating as something in which he would find happiness. But, the building is completed, and he is not happy. His mind has fallen away from its strain; the warmth of friction is felt no longer; thought is dull, and he has a foretaste of that aching void in the heart of which so few men understand the meaning, or for which so few who experience it ever find the cure. Now, let me throw down his castle, and see what the result will be."

"O no, no," answered Mr. Fanshaw, interposing; "that would be cruel."

"Cruel only on the outside, but with a sweet nut of kindness in the centre," was the almost tenderly spoken answer, for it was a father who said this; and rising, he moved past the toy building, touching it as if by accident. A crash, and the blocks lay a mass of shapeless ruins on the floor. With the crash rang out a cry of pain, and the child, who had worked through a whole hour to erect this goodly castle, flung himself in grief across a chair. His sobs and tears went to the heart of Mr. Fanshaw, and he said, aside to his friend:

"That was not well done."

"We shall see," was the answer.

A few minutes passed in a silence only broken by the child's sorrow.

"My son." The father spoke in tenderness, yet firmly. There came no answer.

"Come to me, Alfred."

The boy came, slowly, great drops glistening on his eyelashes, and wetting his cheeks.

"That was a fine castle, my son."

The child answered with a sob. He saw, yet, only the ruins.

"A beautiful castle," added the father; "and you builded it."

Out of the ruins began to arise, in the child's mind, the fair creation which he had wrought only a little while before. His quivering lip grew firmer, a glimmer of light shone through his tears.

"And you can build it again. Be a brave, strong boy. Clear away the ruins, as we do after a fire, and set the foundations once more."

Only a word or two beyond these were needed. The child was soon at his castle-building again, all absorbed in the work; and soon the low music of his happy heart came murmuring through his lips.

"There was a sweet nut within that bitter husk, Mr. Fanshaw," said the friend; "and if you will take a lesson from a child, and go to building again, you will find a sweet nut in your misfortune also."

And doubtless he found the rich and juicy kernel, for in a little while afterwards, under the spur of necessity, he was out in the busy world and at work, trying to build once more.

* * *

CHEAP HAPPINESS.—Children may teach us one blessed, one enviable art—the art of being easily happy. Kind nature has given to them that useful power of accommodation to circumstances which compensates for many external disadvantages, and it is only by injudicious management that it is lost. Give him but a moderate portion of food and kindness, and the peasant's child is happier than the duke's: free from artificial wants, unsatiated by indulgence, all nature ministers to his pleasures; he can carve out felicity from a bit of hazel twig, or fish for it successfully in a puddle. We love to hear the boisterous joy of a troop of ragged urchins, whose cheap playthings are nothing more than mud, snow, sticks, or oyster-shells; or to watch the quiet enjoyment of a half-clothed, half-washed little fellow of four or five years old, who sits with a large rusty knife and a lump of bread and butter at his father's door, and eats with an appetite which Lucullus might have envied.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER
BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

WHEN the love of truth fires up the passions and puts its lightning in the brain, then let men give heed, for a prophet is among them. The love of truth is the strength of all heroism. That cause alone is worthy which is eternally right, and he alone is worthy, who, in devotion to the right, defends it.

THE enthusiasms of the man of pleasure are but few and transient; his appetites, like angry creditors, are continually making fruitless demands for what he is unable to pay, and the greater his former pleasures, the more strong his regrets, the more impatient his expectations.

WE have heard some of the first judges of whist say that it was not those who played the best by the true laws of the game that would win most, but those who played best to the false play of others, and this may be true of the great game of the world.

ALTHOUGH men are accused of not knowing their own weakness, perhaps as few know their own strength. It is in men as in soils, where sometimes there is a vein of gold, which the owner knows not of.

THOSE who are ready to die of joy at obtaining the lowest office, may afterwards die of grief because they can't obtain the highest.

NOTHING, perhaps, strikes the ear more pleasantly than a pretty woman's charming voice, except, perhaps, her charming hand.

POLITICIANS, who boast of acting without respect to party, generally act without respect for themselves.

COMMUNE often with yourself. No doubt you might commune with much wiser persons, but with none more profitably.

MANY a man is destroyed by his own cunning, as the Athenian boy was devoured by the fox in his bosom.

THE reverend Mr. Stone of Ohio has just published an admirable volume of sermons. There are "sermons in Stones."

THE longest-lived birds and the longest-lived beasts are the birds and beasts of prey. The longest-lived men are the lawyers.

CARLYLE says there is more argument in Milton's poetry than in his prose. It seems then he "made the *verse* appear the better reason."

PASSION looks not beyond the moment of its existence. Better, it says, the kisses of love to-day, than the felicities of heaven afar off.

IN travelling, keep near to the men of "fair round bellies with good capon lined." These are the men that look sharpest to their comfort.

IF the principles of contentment are not within us, worldly grandeur will as soon add a cubit to our stature as to our happiness.

INDOLENCE itself may well incline a person to be honest, as it requires infinitely less pains and contrivance to be an honest man than a knave.

MANY persons seem to feel a great solicitude for your soul's welfare, who are entirely indifferent to your body's.

MAN is more distinguished from other animals by his crimes and vices than by his intelligence.

ACTUAL death cannot be painful. There can be no pain when there is no patient.

WHEN we see a woman with sleeves as big as mealbags, we are not disposed to pin our faith upon them.

WOMEN should think and reflect calmly. Let them not keep their *heads* in a bustle.

MANY lawyers must be very poor arithmeticians, never being able to get as far as *Practice*.

MOST persons have a mortal antipathy to a snake, and yet he is said to be a very charming animal.

EMERSON says that most people are the devotees of custom. Especially the shopkeepers, we suppose.

To doubt all men and to trust all are equally silly. Doubt the doubtful and trust the trustworthy.

IN children first, and the better sort of women next, we find the purest types of human character.

HE who has the disposition to do good cannot long lack the means, for the disposition creates them.

PRESERVING the health by too strict a regimen is the most wearisome and intolerable of maladies.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A BURGLAR, in attempting to enter a house in Brooklyn, a few nights ago, got caught on a stout hook as he dropped from the window to the kitchen floor, and the iron point, being barbed, fastened into his side in such a manner that he could not get it out. After suffering great pain, he was obliged to halloo for help; the frightened family sent out for a policeman, and the burglar was *cut loose* and marched off to a Station House, where a surgeon had to be called in to dress his wound.

A COUPLE of Spaniards, belonging to the crew of a vessel that recently came into port, got into a fight one morning recently, and using their knives, they cut and mangled each other in a frightful manner. One of them had his nose cut off, besides receiving several severe wounds in the breast and side; the other was nearly disembowelled, and it was thought that neither could long survive.

A VILLAINOUS-LOOKING old woman was recently detected in an attempt to abduct a beautiful little boy whose parents live in Fourth street. She had inveigled him to the Hoboken Ferry, where an uncle of the child fortunately met them, and rescued the poor little fellow from a fate which any mother would shudder to think of. The old hag made her escape.

A SINGULARLY-ACTING but well-dressed man attempted, one afternoon lately, to thrust his foot between a Fulton ferry-boat and the bridge of the slip, just as the boat was about to come in contact with the latter, and on being prevented from doing so by a gentleman standing near, he became much enraged, and could only be quieted by the calling of a policeman.

A PORTER, in the employment of a firm in Front street, was detected the other evening in an attempt to rob his employers of a quantity of sugar and coffee. This led to the discovery that goods which the firm had missed from time to time had been taken by the same dishonest employee, who had bought a house and lot out of the proceeds of his crimes.

AN exchange paper says that "a thief was recently caught in Philadelphia with *over four hundred thousand dollars in gold in his pockets!*" That thief must have been a stalwart fellow, and his pockets must have been stupendously large and strong. Four hundred thousand dollars in gold would weigh over fifteen hundred pounds.

A NUMBER of rowdies, who were intoxicated, got into a fight in Franklin Square, one night recently, and one of them, getting an opponent down, attempted to tear out his tongue; but the latter caught his adversary's fingers between his teeth, and brought him to terms.

TEN thousand dollars in gold was found one day not long since in an old cellar in Greenwich street, which has long been used as a lumber room. The money was in a bag, from the appearance of which it was supposed to have lain in the dirt for several years.

A NUMBER of boys in Washington Park were lately amusing themselves by tossing up marbles and catching them in their mouths, when one of them got a large marble stuck in his throat, and was nearly choked to death before he could be relieved.

A LITTLE girl five years of age, living in Williamsburgh, becoming enraged at her brother, who was four years her senior, struck at him with a fork, and the prongs entering his nose, inflicted a severe and painful wound.

A NUMBER of poor children were playing one day recently in Fourth Avenue, near Union Square, when a carman drove rapidly through the crowd, and ran over and nearly killed two of them. The miscreant then whipped up his horse and escaped.

OVER two hundred thousand wild horses, according to the estimate of an old trapper, were seen in one drove, a short time ago, in northwestern Texas. That is a big story, and anybody would be very credulous who should believe it.

A DRUNKEN woman, in crossing Grand street near the East River, staggered and stumbled in front of the wheel of a cart that was moving rapidly, and received such a severe shock in the side as to kill her almost instantaneously.

AN old man, said to be over eighty years of age, was run over by an omnibus in Broadway, near Trinity Church the other day, and hurt so severely that it was thought he could not survive his injuries.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

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HOMES.

The old saying, "Home is home though it is never so homely," has a sweet and solacing sound, but unfortunately there is no truth in it as a universal maxim. Are the thousands of damp cellars and squalid garrets in New York, of which red-eyed drunkards are the masters, *homes?* Ask the ghastly and attenuated wives to whom these men reel nightly, if *they* consider such places homes? They will tell you they are not *homes*, but *hells*. And there are *wives*, too, in such dens of poverty, who make indigence a double curse by their thriftlessness and their vices, rendering the miserable domiciles hateful to sober and industrious husbands. In such places children are not *brought* up; they are *dragged* up, and, when old enough, are morally certain to be dragged *down*. Yet there is no reason why this state of things should exist. There is a living for every human being in this country, and no sober, thrifty, hard-working couple can starve or suffer even in populous New York, if they show by their conduct that they are desirous to earn an honest livelihood. Rum, laziness, and general profligacy underlie seven-eighths of the physical miseries of our poor.

But there are other homes than those of poverty which do not deserve the name—mansions supplied with every luxury that a sybarite could desire. How are some of these homes tenanted? By families that have not one thought, one aspiration beyond dress, and glare, and show. Husbands and fathers are deemed of less consequence, in such dazzling establishments, than the costly trumpery of the upholsterer, and looked upon with infinitely more indifference than the gorgeous chairs and sofas, upon which, on state occasions, they sit uneasily, wishing themselves in their more comfortable office seats, covered with well-worn leather. Show houses, inhabited by show families, can never be homes.

There is not a log cabin in the West that a true man would not rather dwell in, than in one of these exhibition palaces in which he is simply a tolerated boarder and lodger. Bankruptcy and ruin have been known to make the gilded butterflies of society happier, by the mere act of rubbing off the gilding and bringing them to a true sense of the purposes for which men and women are sent into the world. In many a handsome and hospitable mansion, adorned with all that wealth, directed by refined taste, can purchase, there is domestic confidence and domestic bliss; but not in show houses glorified with vulgar splendors for ostentation's sake.

There are thousands of abodes, everywhere, which might be homes, and yet are not, simply because the inmates will not take the trouble to study one another's tempers, and to yield gracefully whenever the sharp points of their dispositions are in danger of hostile collision. The whole philosophy of happiness, for such households, is comprised in three words: "Bear and Forbear." In fact, in this phrase consists more than half the philosophy of true Christianity. If any Christian wives, husbands, sons or daughters doubt this, or believing fail to practice it, let them, as Captain Cuttle says, "overhaul their Testament." There will be no occasion to turn down any particular leaf, they will find the maxim illustrated or enforced on every page.

NAPOLEON'S CARE FOR HIS SOLDIERS.

It takes a great man to know the importance of little things. The attention bestowed by Napoleon on the smallest details of military organization has always seemed to us an evidence of his talent scarcely inferior to Austerlitz or Marengo. No general knew better than Napoleon that the efficiency of a soldier depends, first of all, upon his being in perfect health and splendid condition. He tried to bring up all his troops to the condition of pugilists when they fight for the championship. To this end several things are essential, the chief of which are, regular and wholesome food, regular sleep, dry and warm feet, and no powerful stimulants. Napoleon always insisted upon every soldier having two pairs of good shoes, and a good blanket. Everything else could be extemporized or dispensed with, but these—the shoes for the march and the blanket for the bivouac—could neither be extemporized nor dispensed with. When the occasion occurred, Napoleon demanded of his troops the most tremendous exertions; but the admirable health resulting from his system enabled the soldiers to endure fatigues which would have killed ordinary men. It is also to be observed, that this consummate general was careful to give his troops a rest proportioned to their exhaustion, the very instant it was safe to do so.

There was nothing in which Napoleon showed more forethought and good sense than in his management of recruits. He knew that young fellows accustomed to the shop, the field or the desk, cannot change their habits to those of the soldier without great risk. Consequently, he was as careful and tender in managing his new troops as mothers are of their young children. He inured them to the hardships of war by degrees. Their first marches were only ten or twelve miles a day, with a frequent day of rest. The officers who led them from their native provinces to the distant scene of war were charged to make the march a pleasant series of lessons in the military art. Sometimes, when the quarters were good, when the exigency was not pressing, they would halt for ten days, and undergo a daily drill of eight hours. The consequence was, that men who were raw recruits when they left home, arrived at camp trained and toughened soldiers.

A single week of careless handling, irregular sleep and food, damp lodgings, wet feet, and over fatigue, will half spoil and demoralize a regiment of new troops. But let them be cautiously and wisely cared for *at first*, and they soon become hardened and efficient.

LONG WARS.

It is argued by many philosophical writers of the day that there never again can be a long war. The facilities of modern communication, the improvements in arms, and above all, the mighty interests of modern commerce, forbid, in the opinion of these writers, the possibility of such a deplorable event. Let us devoutly hope that the conclusion is just. Human passions, however, when thoroughly aroused, cannot readily be governed by rules of policy. Look at the chronic civil wars in Mexico and the South American Republics. With the exception of a pause now and then from sheer exhaustion, they have been in continuous progress for twenty years. Nor is there any more prospect of a final settlement now than there was when the first blood was shed. The worst feature of such wars is that they utterly demoralize the people, and too often lay the foundation of military despotisms. History teaches this truth most emphatically, and as history is apt to repeat itself, (with some slight variations growing out of human progress,) it is well to take warning from its lessons. It will not do to trust too much to modern civilization as a preventive of protracted and vindictive war. The taste of blood that converts the tamed tiger into a sanguinary monster, has pretty much the same effect upon civilized and Christian man. The latter, it is true, makes his onslaughts under certain rules and regulations, and gives quarter to his prostrate and bleeding foe. But let the war last long enough, and even the chivalry and mercy that should mitigate its horrors, will at last be forgotten. The true way to prevent a *long* war is to make a *strong* war. Every overwhelming blow is a mercy stroke. In a single combat, when one party has no hope of victory, he cries "enough," and as it is with man the individual, so it is with aggregates of men. The policy, the true *Christian* policy in war, is to smite irresistibly and then tender the olive branch with brotherly hand.

THE SICK-ROOM.

There is not a more exacting despot on earth than a sick man of an irritable disposition. Most irritable men are selfish at all times, but the irritable invalid is *all* selfishness. *He* is in pain, *therefore* his devoted wife and daughters must be tortured by groans which he could easily suppress. *He* cannot sleep, therefore *they* must know no rest. He pities himself intensely, exclusively. What the rest of the world suffers he cares not a jot. When the doctor calls he wonders at the shortness of his visit, and seems to have no idea that there is any other sick man than himself. If there is, what cares he! All the town may die if it likes, but it is his business to get well, and the doctor's to direct all his skill, thoughts, and time, if necessary, to that sacred end. He looks at his thin fingers and attenuated arms, and is very sorry for them. Bring him the latent exciting news, and he turns from it with disgust. If any horrible catastrophe would help his case, the invalid would be glad to hear of it, but as it cannot, what is disaster to him? "Less than nothing and vanity."

What a glorious and angelic contrast to such *sick men* is afforded by almost all *sick women*. The patience with which woman endures the most fearful agony, puts to shame the boasted courage of the "lordlier sex." She has smiles of thankfulness for those around her couch, and pays in kindliest words for the ministrations which men in such cases are apt to receive with growls if not with curses. Pangs of which no *man* has any adequate idea, she endures with cheerfulness for man's sake, and often in the agonies of death she cheers, and comforts, and consoles those who stoop to catch the last accents of her dying lips. Let manhood vail its crest to the unselfish heroism of woman.

THE PIONEER FROG.

It was on a pleasant June day, which by some mistake had been interpolated into last April, that we saw the pioneer frog of the season. He sat, Crusoe-like, on a little Juan Fernandez of green mud in the centre of a small Pacific of stagnant water, and there was an expression of quiet enjoyment in his naturally sorrowful face, that was half epicurean, half self-complacent. No wonder the old fellow felt comfortable. Under a blanket of slime he had slept apoplectically the whole winter long, shut up like a four-bladed knife, and now, his torpidity broken in upon by the sun, he had floated to the surface to get his green back tickled by its beams, and was rejoiced to find the world properly warmed for his reception. Unpleasant visions had not troubled his winter sleep, nor did any fear or doubt disturb his waking contemplations. Although it was his mission to *croak*, he was neither disappointed nor discontented, and, unlike many two-legged bags of wind, he had no ambition to quit his native puddle, to bellow in a sphere where his presence would have been an intrusion.

What a blessing it would be to society if certain human bipeds were as modest and unambitious as bull-frogs; content to move quietly through the waters of life, and only opening their mouths at appropriate seasons. Such people are, however, very rare, and it seems to us that the tribe does not increase. In the world's great pond, a game of leap-frog, in which each player seems intent on leaping a little farther moonward than his neighbor, and making more noise about it, is in constant progress, and the result is that too many of us jump to false conclusions. Frogs are more discreet. They look before they leap, and never cut any "didos" without a good and sufficient reason.

BOTH SIDES.

Every body, at a certain age, is apt to think that there is nothing like what was in use, or practice, "*in our day.*" This is an amiability, which should not weakly degenerate into a timid conservatism opposed to all improvement. Adam and Eve probably thought the same, and yet their posterity have made a *few* improvements since Eden. The moral of this is, that while the counsels of old people should not be trodden under foot by the eager haste of youth, neither should the mature in age barricade every diverging path of adventure, because *their* feet never walked in it.

INDECISION.

There is a commodity of which the greatest niggard and miser has always plenty for gratuitous distribution; and that is, *good advice.* As to advice, we are willing to listen to it when we have time to spare; as to following it, every man, after having listened and pondered, should be able, if self-poised, to have a mind of his own, and decision enough to act upon it, even in the face of "advice," if necessary. They who agree with every man they meet, will lead a tangled life of it, and cross their own path twenty-times a day.

A REAL HEROINE.

Early on the morning of the 27th of May, 1813, the garrison in charge of Fort George, on the Canada side of the mouth of the Niagara, was alarmed by the report that a large American force was approaching the place, in boats, with the intention of attacking it.

The troops of the garrison were commanded by General Vincent. The attacking party of Americans was led by General Boyd and Colonel Miller. Scarcely had the latter commenced the landing, under the fire of the British soldiers drawn up in a line along the beach, than Vincent, foreseeing that the place would fall into the hands of the assailants, directed that the houses of the town should be set on fire, hoping, under cover of the conflagration and the consequent confusion of the distressed inhabitants, to make good his own retreat to the woods in the rear. For this unnecessary and barbarous order, the memory of the British general is to this day held in detestation by the people of the place. The first notice the inhabitants (mostly women and children, the men being absent in the service of the government) had, was the red flames bursting from the dwellings about them; and many of them without clothes, as they leaped from their beds, rushed from their burning houses, to return afterwards to heaps of smoldering ruins.

One of the doomed dwellings, which stood apart from other buildings, was occupied by a family of the name of Leach. It consisted of Mrs. Leach, (her husband being absent with the Provincial troops,) her daughter Margaret, about sixteen, and some younger children. Besides these, an old lady, a relation of the family, for many months unable to leave her bed, was in an upper room of the house.

The first intimation this family had of what was going on about them, was a heavy crash at the front door, which aroused them from sleep; and springing from their beds, they found a number of soldiers already in the house. They carried brands of fire; and hastily warning the occupants to leave the house, they broke up the furniture and piled it in the middle of the room, where it was soon in a blaze.

Seeing this, Margaret, who was a beautiful and courageous girl, ran to the outer room, and returning with a pail of water, dashed it upon the flames before the soldiers could interfere to arrest her. At this moment, another soldier entered the house with a burning brand. But before his comrades could reach him, to rekindle the splinters from it, the brave girl snatched it from his hand, and striking the soldier across the face with it, threw it into a puddle in front of the door.

All this had been done before a word had been spoken by the terrified Mrs. Leach. She now inquired the meaning of this outrageous conduct in British soldiers, who she supposed were among them as protectors, and not to burn their houses over their heads.

"It is the orders, madam," said one of the soldiers. "The Yankees are landing, and will soon be in possession of the place. Run, Jack," he continued, turning to one of his comrades, "run to the last house and get another brand. We must obey orders, boys, if the women don't like it."

This was said to the fellow Margaret had so unceremoniously saluted with the burning torch. He instantly disappeared, but soon returned with a bundle of smoking faggots, which were thrown upon the extinguished rubbish; and falling upon his hands and knees, the soldier commenced to blow the faggots into a blaze. As the room was filling with smoke, rendering it uncomfortable for the other soldiers to remain, they, not doubting that all would soon be wrapped in conflagration, withdrew to join other parties of incendiaries, busy in their work of destruction.

In the mean time the fearless Margaret Leach, who had hastened to the well for another pail of water, returned, and finding the single soldier still engaged in kindling the fire, dropped her burden, and catching up an iron from the empty fireplace, struck the man a blow with it on the back of the head, which knocked him senseless, with his face upon the flames. Dragging him partially from the fire, she again dashed the contents of the pail upon it, and once more the flames were extinguished.

She now called to her mother, who, almost frantic with fear, was assisting her younger children to escape from the house.

"The fire is out, mother!" she shouted, "but come here, quick! I want your help!"

Mrs. Leach returned to the room, and found her daughter alone with the body of the soldier, which she was trying to drag towards the door opening upon the cellar.

"My God! what have you done, Margaret! Have you killed him?"

"I fear I have," replied the brave girl, trembling excessively with the terrible excitement she was in. "But quick, mother, to the cellar with him, for if his comrades return and find what we have done, they will murder us all!"

Mrs. Leach assisted her daughter, and dragging the redcoat to the top of the stairs, tumbled him headlong below. Then closing the door, they hastened to toss the still smoking fragments from the floor to the yard.

Scarcely had they accomplished this, than another party of soldiers, who had deserted their command still endeavoring to prevent the debarkation of the Americans, retreated past the house, and seeing that it had not been fired, two of them, carrying firebrands with them, attempted to fire it from without. But the brick foundation, which was carried several feet above the surface of the ground, made this difficult.

"Inside with you!" shouted some of their fellows; "you couldn't start the fire there in an hour."

Upon this hint they made for the door, which, having been broken from its hinges by the first burning party, could not be fastened against them.

But no sooner had the foremost of the two entered the room where the two women were, than the heroic Margaret Leach, who had armed herself with the musket of the soldier she had disabled, ran him through the bowels with its fixed bayonet.

The man, uttering a cry of agony, fell forward on the weapon, and forced it from the hands of the courageous young lady. But quick as thought, she snatched it from under him, and springing to the entrance like a tigress prepared to defend her young, she would have dealt a death blow upon the other, had not her mother, reassured by the fearless conduct of her daughter, armed herself with a heavy fire-shovel, and buried the corner of it in the soldier's forehead, causing him to fall outside the door.

With great presence of mind, the women first extinguished the brands the wounded men had dropped upon the floor, and then dragged the dying soldier into the room, lest the sight of him might attract his passing comrades.

"Now, mother," said Margaret, "let us to the cellar with these fellows too, before another set of them arrive, for they seem determined that our house, at least, shall not escape. If those Yankees were only in the town, all would be well."

And dragging the two soldiers, still bleeding profusely, across the floor, they also were forced to the cellar.

This done, they set to work clearing up the blood stains, before others should make their appearance.

But while the brave women were engaged in this, they were alarmed by sounds upon the cellar stairs. Steps were heard cautiously ascending. The truth at once flashed upon them. The first soldier, whom Margaret had floored with the fire iron, had been only stunned; but revived by the cool air of the cellar, he was now returning to the upper room to revenge himself upon them, for the rough handling they had given him.

In another instant he would have been upon them. But now the brave girl, who seemed equal to any emergency, sprung to the door, and grasping the bow of the latch, and throwing all her strength upon it, held it with such firmness that the fellow could make no impression against her.

"Let me help you, Margaret," said her mother, running to her assistance.

"No! no!" exclaimed this brave-hearted maiden, "I'm sure I can hold it, mother. But do you run to Aunt Lydia's room and see if the Yankees are in the town—I'm certain they'll save us. And oh! 'twould be so nice to make these house-burning rascals prisoners to them."

Mrs. Leach ran, as directed, to the upper room, occupied by the sick lady, from the window of which she could overlook the town. To her great joy, she saw the red-coats retreating in confusion in the direction of the woods, while the Americans were in hot pursuit. The latter, however, soon gave up the chase, and attempted to save some of the burning houses, and assisted the townspeople to rescue their goods.

Mrs. Leach looked just long enough to see this, and reassuring the trembling invalid with the news, hastened to impart it to her daughter.

"*Thank God! thank God!*" was Margaret's earnest ejaculation, as she still tugged at the cellar door, while the prisoner, now entirely recovered from the effect of the blow, was alternately begging to be released, and cursing in impotent rage at his heroic young captor.

"Now, mother," cried the girl, "run to the street, and bring some of those brave Americans here. Run! I can keep this fellow safe till you come back."

In a few moments Mrs. Leach returned, accompanied by two young men, one of whom was an officer. The whole affair was briefly related to them, and the prisoners—for there were two of them, one only having died in the cellar (the man struck by Mrs. L.)—were taken in charge by them.

No sooner was Margaret Leach, who, throughout the whole struggle with the incendiaries, had behaved with such heroic courage and coolness, relieved from her guard over the cellar door, than she fell fainting into the arms of her mother; and it was some weeks before she recovered from the sudden reaction of the terrible excitement of that hour.

But perhaps the most singular, and, at all events, the most romantic conclusion of this truthful story, is the fact, that the young American officer, struck with the remarkable beauty and extraordinary intrepidity of the young lady, soon after made her his wife; and they are at this time residing almost in sight of the place where they so singularly met. They are now grandparents, ever pleased to narrate to the little ones about them, the story of the capture of Fort George.

A CONFESSION WITHOUT ABSOLUTION.

I might as well own it. I'm "*nervous.*" Not that I should mind it, were a cannon fired off in my ear, or did I sit behind a runaway horse, or any *big* thing of that sort; but for him who drums on the table with his fingers, or taps the carpet with his foot for hours, or grinds his boot-sole on the rounds of my chair, during a whole evening's public performance, *wouldn't* I erect gibbets as high as Haman's? As to your persistent, by-the-hour, hum-hum-hum-mer, no dictionary is equal to the expression of the emotions she evokes. Cold drops of perspiration gather on my forehead as the wretch begins. It is no use to request her to stop, when you know from experience that she will begin again in five minutes. So you resort to stratagem; you open a book, and struck with sudden astonishment at some passage, you ask her in flattering terms *her* unbiassed opinion of it, begging her disinterestedly not to be hasty, but to peruse it *deliberately*, adding that you shall have good reason for thinking *you* must be wrong if *she* does not agree with you. She's lazy, and the trick fails. Then you commence a provocative conversation on some gentleman friend; she stupidly, and, contrary to her usual custom, assents with a nod of her head to everything you say; up you jump, and get some nice tit-bit in shape of a luncheon. "She isn't hungry." You produce your new cloak, or mantle, or bonnet; deuse is in it, if *that* don't change her tune! "Very pretty," she laconically remarks, and proceeds remorselessly with "The Last Rose of Summer." Your hair stands on end as you rush into another part of the house, the farthest remove from your tormentor, and, throwing up the window for a breath of air, slam it down again to shut out "the Battle of Prague" that's being fought on the piano by a girl of "sixteen summers" and, let us hope not a fall. Retreating to another window, you hear a wretched parrot burlesquing every Sally and Tommy in the neighborhood. You rush to the front door, and some juvenile Nero is throwing stones after a yelping cur with a broken leg; while a hot, tired beggar-woman is slapping a baby that has had nothing but the colic in its stomach for hours; not to mention a dilapidated old man, very weak in the thorax, doing "Auld Lang Syne," on a wheezy flute, in a manner to make you d—enounce all your "auld acquaintance," who, letting *him* alone, are the last things *you* want "brought to mind."

Now, of course, your apple-dumpling-roast-beef people, who are alive to nothing *but* edibles, can't by any possibility understand *this* state of mind, no more than can a deaf man sounds; still the sounds are there, just as sure—as that an Insane Hospital will some day take charge of you!

FANNY FERN.

HOW THEY TAKE IT.

I have a lady-friend who, notwithstanding all my admonitions, still persists in the lunacy of being civil to her own sex. Not long since we were walking together, when she accidentally trod on the trailing skirt of a female before us. Foreseeing that she was about to make a fool of herself by asking pardon, I laid a restraining hand upon her arm. Oblivious of the warning, she said, very gently, "I *really* beg your pardon, Madam." "You nasty thing!" retorted the vixen, snatching up her contaminated skirt and sailing majestically past. Comment is unnecessary.

FANNY FERN

Of all the passions, jealousy is that which exacts the hardest service, and pays the bitterest wages. Its service is to watch the *success* of our enemy—its wages, to be *sure* of it.

Art surpasses strength; and patience and reflection make those things possible which, in the first instance, appear almost insurmountable.

THOUGHTS AS THEY OCCUR.—No. 87.

BY ONE WHO KEEPS HIS EYES AND EARS OPEN.

Mr. Bonner:—Did we not address you from Pennsylvania not long since? Was it a month or a year? Who can measure time in these stirring days? We have a faint recollection of riding from Pittsburgh to Cincinnati, thence to Madison, in Indiana, thence to Indianapolis. It was like a long ride through an infinite and everlasting camp. Night or day was alike. States were simply hives a-swarming.

During a few days' stay in Pittsburgh, I visited with great interest several of the manufactories for which it is so famous, and none with more pleasure and instruction than the iron and steel works. At one of the foundries government has a large contract for cannon. It was at this foundry that the famous *Floyd*, a fifteen inch columbiad, was cast. A mate to it is now completing. Some idea may be had of the size, when it is known that its gross weight, when cast, was *forty tons*. But when it had been worked down, it was reduced to the weight of twenty-six tons. It is named *The Union*. The cannon of this establishment, and, I believe, all now cast for the United States Government, are cooled off first on the *inside*. This is effected by casting the cannon with a *core* for the bore, through which cold water circulates while it is in the mould. The crystalization thus takes place within, and the contraction must be at the outside surface, giving the guns much greater toughness and resisting power. This immense gun, the Union, is twelve inch bore, and is supposed capable of sending a ball seven miles. But it is supposed that four miles will be the limit of accuracy and effectiveness.

The accuracy required in the casting of shot and shell may be seen in the fact, that every one of them must be tried by two *rings*, through one of which they must easily pass, and through the other they must *not* go at all, and the difference in size of these two rings is only *five-one-hundredths-of-an-inch*. The powder now used for cannon is of the size of a large pea; but even larger is prepared for these great guns, the kernels being of the size of a walnut. The advantages of this size are very great; and it is understood that military men are convinced that artillery powder has hitherto been too fine. Much of each charge of fine powder is blown out, without being fired; but in a mass of coarse powder the interstices are pierced with the flame; and the whole mass is, in succession, exploded with accelerating force before the ball leaves the gun.

We visited many of the great Iron works not engaged in any manufacture of arms. There are in Pittsburgh sixteen iron mills, with an average of 200 men each, whose annual wages are one and a quarter millions of dollars. Of pig iron there is cast about one hundred and fifty thousand tons of metal every year. Ores go to the coal mines cheaper than coal and men can be sent to the mines. At Pittsburgh, therefore, you shall find the copper ores of Lake Superior sent hither for smelting. But, oh, the coal-smoke! What shall be said of a city that has come to regard coal-smoke as a luxury, and a clear air and a clean city a misfortune?

Dear Mr. Bonner:—I am twenty-three years old, and was married five years since to a smooth faced villain, whom I loathe above everything on earth. I never loved the man, and it was only after long persuasion by friends that I consented to marry him. If he had any redeeming traits about him, I should be reconciled to my lot. Those who urged me to the fatal step now urge me to apply for a divorce, but I have never been able to reconcile my religious principles to this step. Not long ago I became acquainted with a gentleman about my own age, (my husband is twenty years my senior,) to whom I am warmly attached, and who might have made me happy if I had met him soon enough, or if I had been truthful enough to cast the man I did not love from me. But I was young, and did not know my own heart. Now, Mr. Bonner, what shall I do? Shall I obtain a divorce, and marry the man I love, or drag out a miserable, thankless life with the one I hate, though he loves me as well as a nature like his is capable of loving? My affections and principles are strangely at variance. Will you advise me?

SYBIL.

We consider your case a sad one, Sybil. The circumstances of your domestic life are sad enough; but the conditions of your internal or spiritual life seem to be the saddest of all. That "gentleman about your own age," &c., is the plague spot in your case. The frankness, and the tone of simple-hearted innocence, with which you "tell the whole story," indicate that you are quite unconscious of being at all in the wrong in cherishing a warm attachment for, and in desiring to marry, that young gentleman, although you are now a wedded wife. This will never do. You must rouse yourself from this blind condition, and look into your own heart with an unselfish and relentless eye. Try to judge yourself as you would judge a stranger situated as you are. Your task of self-examination and self-judgment will be a difficult and a painful one, and you must seek wisdom and strength from on high to enable you to go through with it triumphantly. From what you say about your "religious principles," we suppose that you are a professed disciple of Him who preached the Sermon on the Mount. Read that divine discourse, and obey its precepts, and discipline your selfish and rebellious heart into harmony with its pure and lofty teachings, and your sufferings will either pass away, or else, tempered and purified by grace divine, they will sublimate into a crown of glory for your martyred brow.

TIME TRIES ALL.

There are more things latent in this world than are dreamt of in natural philosophy. In some men there is a latent hero, and in others a latent thief; in one, an unsuspected Howard, in another, an undeveloped Robespierre. Time tries all. All men are honest, said Sir Walter Scott, till opportunity, that fatal touchstone, proves their metal to be base. And opportunity, which is to many a fatal touchstone, is to others a glorious one, proving their metal genuine.

MAGGIE BURNS,

THE HEROINE OF THE DELAWARE.

In the next number of the Ledger we shall commence a story by Sylvanus Cobb, Jr., under the above title. The scene opens just after Washington retreating before Cornwallis, had crossed the Delaware, into Pennsylvania. This was one of the most hopeless periods of the Revolution.

"Dark and gloomy was the hour,
And Freedom's fires burnt low;
For thirty days had Washington
Retreated from the foe."

But like a lion at bay the great chief at last turned upon his pursuers, and at Princeton and Trenton dealt them a blow which sent a thrill of joy and exultation throughout the length and breadth of the land. It is at this stirring period, when Tories lurked and plotted mischief in every neighborhood, that Maggie Burns, *The Heroine of the Delaware*, comes upon the scene. Mr. Cobb here finds a fitting field for the display of his peculiar powers, and most admirably does he improve his opportunities. The narrative stirs the blood of the reader like the sound of a trumpet, and the heroine takes possession of his heart at once, and keeps it to the end.

"A LITTLE WHILE."

St. John, 7th and 33rd.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

The Rose that rounds its glorious disc
  When Summer gilds the scene,
And sits upon its mossy throne
  O'er every flower a queen,
What sighs it in the florist's ear
So low that none beside may hear?
    A little while.

The sorrow that subdues us here,
  Says 'mid its sharpest thorn,
"Weeping endureth for a night,
  But joy illumes the morn,"
Our Father's discipline doth bear
On darkest scroll the motto fair—
    A little while.

Yon holy man, with whitening brow,
  And Faith's assurance clear,
Departing for a higher state—
  A more congenial sphere—
To those who mourn around his bed
What saith the smile, tho' speech be dead?—
    A little while.

And so these words, Redeemer dear,
  To thy disciples spoken,
Breathe on in living music here,
  Keeping their spell unbroken,
And still on these frail forms of clay
We wear the inscription night and day—
    A little while.

Hartford, Conn., April 18th, 1861.

THE HARLOW ESTATE.

ITS HEIRS---REAL AND PRETENDED.

A TALE OF CITY LIFE

BY P. HAMILTON MYERS,

AUTHOR OF "PAUL MORTON," "PRISONER OF THE BORDER," "BELL BRANDON," "THE VAN VELDENS," ETC.

CHAPTER XLII.

Mrs. Sitterly was conveyed home in an insensible condition, and when she had recovered consciousness, it was scarcely attended with a return of reason.

Wild, searching looks, and incoherent questions about the unsummoned witness, whom she now seemed to regard as a dreadful apparition, and now as a more dreadful reality, betrayed the torture of her mind.

Her nervous system had undergone a violent shock, and she was physically prostrated to so alarming an extent, that her physicians forbade all converse with her on any other subject than the actual requirements of the sick chamber.

The fourth day of the trial—the day on which this strange interruption to its proceedings had taken place—was Saturday, and the Court had adjourned until the ensuing Monday.

But early on Sunday morning indications became apparent that the case was to be terminated by a Power higher than all earthly tribunals.

As her bodily powers failed, her mind became clearer, and it was in the hour when she began to believe that she was getting well, and expressed a confident hope of being strong enough for the continued labors of the morrow, that her physician informed her that there would be no morrow for her on earth. Horrified beyond expression, she refused to believe the terrible tidings, and sent hopefully for other doctors, only to receive from them a confirmation of the dreadful sentence which had gone forth against her. Despair and remorse now took possession of the miserable woman, and she who had never known what it was to show pity to others, now called frantically on Heaven for mercy.

To Evelyn she said, when no one else was near, and while she was in anxious expectation of the arrival of a clergyman whom she had summoned—

"Send quickly for Mr. Lynde and for Herbert; let not a minute be lost, and do not let your father or Simon know of it. See yourself to their admission. Go! go! I may do something yet!"

But Evelyn, who feared that the wretched woman would pass away before her mission could be performed, tarried and tried to speak.

"Why do you wait, Evelyn?" she asked, eagerly. "There is no time to be lost."

"Will you not first tell *me*, mother, that this boy is your son Herbert?"

"No, no, no!" she exclaimed, covering her face with her hands. "*He is not my son!* Would to God that he were!"

"Oh, mother, can you say this *now?* at such an hour?"

"Yes—yes; you do not understand me," replied the panting woman. "This boy *is* Herbert! *your* Herbert, whom you call brother, but he is not my son! Go, now, and when *they* come you shall hear the rest of this dreadful story. Alas!" she continued, "I can scarcely claim credit even for this late confession, for there is one at hand, a dreadful avenger, who stands ready to proclaim it."

Evelyn did not doubt that the wretched woman referred to the mysterious person they had seen in court, but she did not dare to speak of him, lest the allusion should bring on a final and fatal paroxysm of terror.

She hastened to fulfill the requirements of Mrs. Sitterly, and she counted the minutes until the messenger returned accompanied by the astonished Seth and his little client.

Hastily and tearfully communicating to them the character of the extraordinary interview to which they were summoned, she ascended with them to the chamber of the dying woman, where her father, together with the clergyman, the physicians, and Mr. Blass, were now in attendance.

The husband and Simon, greatly astonished and alarmed at the arrival of these unexpected visitors, whispered a moment together, and then with Evelyn, and having learned that they had been sent for, they for the first time suspected, and would have prevented the dreaded confession. But it was impossible.

Mrs. Sitterly would listen to nothing they had to say in deprecation of her disclosures. She called upon the clergyman and the physicians, and upon all present, to bear witness to her story, and assist her late attempt at restitution to those she had wronged.

Seth called for pen and paper, and asked Mrs. Sitterly if she wished that he should put her statement in writing, in a form which would constitute it legal evidence.

She replied quickly, "Yes—oh, yes! I have already told Evelyn," she said, in a faint voice, for her power of articulation had almost failed, "that this boy is not my son."

Seth looked greatly alarmed and grieved at this declaration, and during the pause which she was obliged to make, Blass again sought to prevent further revelations.

"Rest a few minutes, Louise," he said, and take another of your composing draughts."

She waved him off, and fastening her eyes upon the clergyman, as if she thought that he was the most appropriate witness of her confession, she continued:

"I never gave birth to a child. How the fraud was managed by which Harlow's relatives were kept out of their rights—*he* can tell you," she said, pointing to Blass.

"She raves! her delirium has returned!" exclaimed Simon, who with difficulty had been kept silent up to this point. But the leading physician now informed him that if he again interrupted the dying woman in her attempt to relieve her conscience of its heavy load, he should exercise his right of causing him to be expelled from the room.

Sitterly was too much overcome with grief and apprehension, and too little accustomed to exercise authority in his own home to think of claiming any such power now.

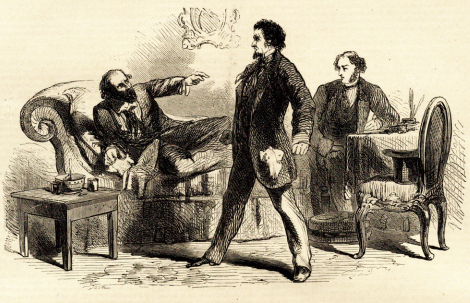
"*He* can tell you," repeated the sufferer, "and—and there is one more—if he is living—I know not," she said, shuddering, and covering her eyes with her hands, as if she would shut out some dreadful sight. "One more—that is *Doctor* Hassel. Herbert is the son of a poor woman—he was born about five months after my husband's death. Hassel *bought* him—of his father on the day he was born. *He* managed the deception—*he* was my attending physician—at the pretended birth. There was one other—she is dead—my sister, Simon's wife."

"Tell them, at least," interposed Blass, "that I had no hand in this plot—that I knew nothing of it until afterwards."

"That is true—he was guiltless *there*. But I must hasten—I feel that I have but a few minutes more. Harlow had relations living, although he had disowned them."

"Tell us who is Herbert's mother," interposed the weeping Evelyn, eagerly, for she feared this valuable information would be lost.

"I cannot—I never saw her—never knew her name, and if she is living she knows nothing of her child, or of me. She was sworn to life-long secresy, and to make no effort to recover her son, unless released by me from her oath. I release her now, if she lives and wishes to claim him. Hassel has often said that she was alive, and that he knew where to find her; but it may be that he has pretended it, only to help retain his cruel power over me. I have wronged the boy. If there is anything that belongs to me, let it be divided between him and Frederick. But restitution is chiefly due to another."



A DISAPPOINTED HEIR-EXPECTANT.

A violent ringing of the door-bell at this instant resounded through the house, and the dying woman started up in her bed with a scream—looked wildly around as if seeking a place for flight—and then fell heavily back upon her pillow, exclaiming:

"'Tis he! I know that call. Keep him out! Mercy! Mercy!"

She spoke no more intelligibly. A state of delirium ensued, followed by a return of unconsciousness, which in a few minutes terminated in death.

Mr. Sitterly had heard the story of his wife's shame and sin for the first time, and dreadful as was the tale, there was one point on which it afforded him something like a sense of relief. In so long denying and disowning Herbert, she had at least not been guilty of repudiating her own son.

Scarcely had the wretched woman ceased to breathe, when he and Blass began to reproach themselves and each other for not having taken effective measures to prevent such disgraceful disclosures and their dreadful consequences.

But the appearance of the strange man in court had produced nearly as great a shock upon the mind of Simon as upon that of Mrs. Sitterly; and enervated by a sense of guilt, and by the cowardice which guilt produces, and expecting hourly to be confronted by this witness to the greatest of his crimes, he had no longer possessed his usual resolution and energy.

The confession, too, had already been partly made to Evelyn, and it would perhaps have been impossible for him to suppress the remainder, if he had made a more determined effort to do so. The whole story had been so unexpectedly and so quickly told that it seemed to him like some dreadful dream. Yet, as he had not been inculpated in the crime which had been revealed—he had at least nothing personally to dread from its discovery beyond the loss of expected legacies. Yet with quick thought he had reflected that even these were rather imperilled than lost; that the tale he was listening to would be regarded, if stoutly denied, as the ravings of insanity, and that there would be none to sustain or corroborate it.

He had trembled with apprehension lest the confession should extend to other matters, and should disclose the dreadful act in which he had been a participant, and the victim of which had so signally avenged himself on one of his enemies; and when the dying woman's story had ended without reference to this dreadful charge, he felt like one reprieved from some impending and frightful doom.

Mrs. Sitterly had judged rightly in regard to the visitor whose violent ringing of the door-bell, echoing dismally through the silent house, had been, as it were, the knell of her parting spirit.

It was Hassel, the accomplice in her crime, who, by whatever means he had escaped the dreadful fate designed for him, had returned to New York and had already in so startling a manner once announced himself, who now, in saner mood, and in more fitting garb, sought an interview with her.

When informed of the condition in which she lay, he showed great astonishment, but still insisted upon seeing her. While one of the domestics talked with him at the door, another, alarmed by the controversy, and fearing that he might attempt to force his way upstairs, had hastened to inform Mr. Sitterly of the danger.

Frederick started to go down, and Blass, after a little cowardly hesitation, followed.

"This man," he said to Sitterly, "is the only person living who can corroborate poor crazed Louise's story. Let me deal with him—and I think we shall be effectually rid of him; and then no harm will be done after all."

"No harm?"

"No—not as far as the estate is concerned. If Harlow has relatives living, they could make nothing out of all this. A dying woman, raving for hours with the most evident insanity, and afterwards accusing herself of imaginary crimes—no court would listen to it for a moment! You can acknowledge Herbert as your lost step-son on condition of being his guardian. He inherits the estate; you control it; we will have our annuities, and all will be safe."

The weak, wicked man saw new gleams of hope, and did not in any point oppose his more crafty colleague.

Together they confronted the visitor, whose emaciated figure, and cadaverous face, told a sad story of suffering, but whose eye yet glowed with baleful fire. He seemed to take no especial notice of Blass, but advancing to meet Sitterly, he said:

"I *must* see her before she dies. The case is urgent; and if she refuses, tell her," he said in a loud voice, and with a threatening look—"tell her——"

"Hush!" said Blass, advancing; "she has already gone where your power over her is lost."

"Dead?"

"She is dead; but," he continued, sinking his voice, "she has *confessed all.*"

Hassel started backwards in evident alarm.

"More than this—she has accused you, *Doctor Hassel*, as the instigator and accomplice of her crime! Her dying declarations have been legally taken and attested, which, you well know, constitutes them evidence."

"Yes—yes."

"And within an hour process will be out for your arrest. In the meantime, I shall detain you here."

He stepped towards the door, as if to lock it; but the guilty man darted past him, and, of course, after a feint of attempted detention, was allowed to make his escape.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Astounded by the marvellous turn which events had taken, and unspeakably shocked by the terrible death-bed they had witnessed, Evelyn and Seth conversed apart before the latter left the house of mourning; Herbert only being with them.

"Can this dreadful story be true?" he asked.

'I fear it is," replied Evelyn; "for it solves the mystery of years; it explains why dear Herbert has never had a mother's love or care; and why his claims to recognition have been so strongly opposed. A mother *never* could have done this."

"Very true; it *is* more incredible than that, prompted by avarice, she should have committed the crime which she has confessed. We must believe it."

"And the suit——"

"Will be stopped—*is* stopped by operation of Law, by the death of one of the parties to it. It is not likely that it will ever be resumed."

"And poor Herbert is then an orphan, fortuneless, without a home; but whoever or whatever else he is, he is *my Herbert* still," she exclaimed, throwing her arms around the child and kissing him fondly; "no one can dispute it *now*. No doubts can longer dampen this one joy. He *is* the pet, the playmate of my childhood, whom I mourned so long as dead, of whom I thought ever by day and dreamed by night."

Overcome by her emotions Evelyn gave way to tears for a few minutes, and then resumed:

"Ah, Seth, you never knew—you never *can* know the intensity of that love, which has but one earthly object on which to expend its strength. Before I knew you (she colored slightly here) such was my sad lot. From the time when this dear boy, at the age of two years, became my father's step-son, until the day he was lost (God forgive my idolatry) *I worshipped him!* When he was dangerously ill, I watched *alone*, night-long, in agony at his bedside, spending every hour of his sleep—every minute, I may say—upon my knees in frantic, almost rebellious prayers to Heaven for his life.

"Of that dreadful day, when he was lost, I need not speak. You yourself know something of its bitterness; but how my burning brain and racked heart endured it, and the terrors of that more awful night which ensued, I often marvel now. It seems strange to me that I did not go mad.

"If time alleviated, it *never* cured my grief. Taught to believe that he was dead, solaced by your friendship, though with little hope then that you could ever be *more* than a friend to me, I still looked with some hope to the future.

"But during those dismal years of your absence in Europe, you can little imagine what I suffered; being literally without a friend—and with those dreadful memories ever corroding my heart. My father loved me not; he always repressed or slighted any attempted manifestation of affection on my part.

"You may think it strange that I speak so fully of these things now. It is because I wish you to comprehend something of that overpowering joy which filled my heart when Herbert was restored to me, and to understand the *doubt* which in the midst of that ecstacy *would* cling to my mind, as to whether such unimaginable bliss could really be true.

"My step-mother's positive and persistent denials of Herbert; the assertions and arguments of my father and of Mr. Blass; the dreadful array of testimony which they produced, has still caused this doubt to haunt me at intervals, like some dreadful spectre.

"How it could be, I could not see; I have argued the question mentally, by the hour, but in some way I feared my hopes were to be dispelled and my happiness again blasted.

"*Never* until this hour have I felt altogether secure. But now—*now* I indeed know that this *is* Herbert—*my Herbert*—my brother still—my brother forever."

The weeping boy flung his arms round her neck and clung to her in a long embrace—and Seth gazed, speechless, upon them, with eyes to which the flooding tears rose faster than he could dash them off.

"Dear Evelyn," he said, taking her hand, "fear not for the future, either for him, or for yourself. My home shall be his, and I hope you will soon consent to make it your's also—I do not think your father will longer oppose our marriage—and brighter fortunes are already rapidly dawning on me."

Seth indeed, being brought into sudden celebrity by his great suit, and by the skill and talent with which he had managed it, had already been offered a profitable partnership by his friend, Mr. Silby, which he had, of course, most gladly accepted.

When he returned home with his extraordinary news, the amazement of his friends was of course unbounded, and they discussed the subject and its consequences a long while.

"And is it known," asked the senior Mr. Lynde, "who *is* the heir at law to that great estate?"

"No sir, that is still unknown," replied Seth; "for the miserable woman died with her story unfinished. Evelyn interrupted her once by some inquiries about Herbert's parentage, just as she was about to speak upon that point. After she had answered her, and was a second time alluding to the subject, that loud ringing of the bell occurred, which frightened her so much, and quite unsettled her reason. But whoever he is, he will undoubtedly make his appearance and his claims soon enough.

"I think *I* can tell you something about it, Seth," said his father, emphatically, and with an air which made all his listeners turn curiously to him for the expected information. "I remember well that when old Hugh Harlow died, childless and without a will, there was great speculation as to who would inherit his large property. His wife, of course, would get her dower, but the bulk of the estate was to go to his relatives, if he had any. He had been a morose, surly, avaricious man, nearly estranged from his fellow beings, and it was supposed by many that he had no relations living.

"It turned out differently. A cousin, with whom he once had been on friendly terms, but with whom he had afterwards quarrelled desperately for being unable to return a small loan, had died and left a son. This son came forward, and put in his claim, as the heir, and it would have been established without the least doubt, but for the discovery at about the same time, that another and more direct heir was in existence."

"Was in existence?" repeated Seth.

"Yes—certainly—though he yet lacked several months of being a day old. The riddle is certainly not a hard one. How the announcement was made good—appears to-day for the first time; but no one, I believe, then doubted that Mrs. Harlow became a mother."

"And how did the heir at law bear his discomfiture?"

"Angrily enough. But he was a coarse, boorish fellow, who, I remember, having borrowed some money on the strength of his expectations, treated a crowd of low companions to a great dinner, at one of the hotels, and afterwards kept up for several days a disgraceful revelry. Nobody regretted his disappointment. But I believe he is still living; I am indeed sure that I have seen him within a few years."

"How old a man?"

"He was scarcely of age then—and of course he cannot be much past thirty now. I dare say he will turn up."

"It is too bad that such a man should succeed to so great wealth; but, of course, we cannot help that."

Mrs. Binney had called daily at the house of Mr. Lynde during the week of the trial, to obtain intelligence of its progress. She had heard on Saturday of the strange event which had interrupted the proceedings, and of the melancholy condition in which Mrs. Sitterly had been carried to her home. Feeling, of course the deepest interest in all these events, she came again on Sunday to learn the news. It was an hour or two after Seth's return home, and while the exciting topic was yet being discussed, that the anxious widow called. Appalled by the news of Mrs. Sitterly's death, which had been communicated to her almost before she was inside the doors, she inquired hastily, and with signs of great agitation, the particulars of the event.

Then interrupting Seth, before he could half reply to her questions, she said:

"Did she—did she acknowledge Herbert? What—what did she say of him?"

"She did *not* acknowledge him," replied Seth, and the widow's eyes gleamed with joy as he spoke; "yet she confessed that he was the boy who was once supposed to be her son."

"Did she—did she say that? What else? Pray, tell me what else?"

Seth repeated the material part of the dying woman's story; but still Aunt Ally asked, with clasped hands:

"*What else?*"

He added what more he could remember, but again the anxious, appealing cry rang upon his ears:

"*What else? What else?* Oh! was there *nothing—nothing—nothing* else, Mr. Lynde?"

Struck with the woman's awful earnestness, a thought flashed upon his mind, which he wondered had not occurred to him sooner; and almost trembling now himself, he replied, slowly and emphatically:

"Yes, Mrs. Binney, there *was* one thing more: She said that the mother of Herbert was solemnly sworn to life-long secrecy, unless released by *her;* and she said, moreover, that, if that mother was living, she released her *now* from that oath."

"Oh, God!—my son! my son!" exclaimed the happy woman. "Can I claim my child at last!"

The scene which ensued needs no depicting. Herbert, who was not in the room, was immediately sent for, to receive this most welcome news; and Seth, greatly excited, withdrew to address a note to Evelyn, informing her of the important discovery.

But Miss Sitterly scarcely required this intelligence. No sooner had she recovered from the shock caused by Mrs. Sitterly's death and its attendant circumstances, and from the excitement growing out of her conversation with Seth, than, in her first interval of sober, rational thought, the conviction forced itself upon her, that Mrs. Binney was the mother of Herbert. Delighted with the thought, the certainty as she regarded it, and feeling sure that Aunt Ally was guiltless of any voluntary assent to the dreadful crime which had separated her during ten long years from her child, she was about writing to Mr. Lynde, when she received his note, so fully confirming her hopes.

But it was not until a subsequent day, when the mournful ceremonies at the great mansion were over, that she had an opportunity of meeting Mrs. Binney, and hearing from her own lips the strange story of her life.

It is unnecessary here to present even a synopsis of this varied and melancholy tale, further than to say that it exhibited the poor woman as the victim of, and not a participant in, the nefarious scheme. Yet she found abundant cause for reproaching herself for what, as far as Evelyn could learn, she never could have prevented.

A tyrannical husband, impoverished by intemperance, who, in the hour of her trial, was assailed by the tempter in the very physician who was called to her relief: a husband who had exulted in so ready a mode of replenishing his wasted means, found it easy, against all the prayers and remonstrances of his weak wife, long habituated to abject submission, to fulfil his own horrid contract with the man of sin, and to extort from her the required oath of secrecy.

The monster had not lived long to enjoy the fruits of his crime, yet long enough to disclose to her, in some hour of maudlin kindness, what he had himself learned by stealth, the house which had become the home of his bartered offspring.

That house became, thenceforward, a Mecca to the wretched mother. Her daily pilgrimages were made to some point from which she could gaze upon it, and meditate upon her lost treasure—being too happy if, at some window, she could catch a glimpse of the child, whom she might never, never claim, nor kiss, nor press to her tortured, aching, vacant heart.

Sometimes—oh! how rarely—she had met the baby, robed in its rich laces and embroidery, and drawn in its costly carriage; and if its nurse was good-natured, the mother could stop a moment and gaze upon her son—gaze upon his beautiful features, and trace the resemblance to *him* who, in his days of manliness and truth, had won her young affections, only to lead her down with him, to this state of degradation and woe.

Although Binney lived nearly six months after his wicked deed, he had not quite expended the price of his crime. Carefully storing what he left—and adding monthly to it from her own hard earnings, Aunt Ally was able, at the end of two years, to open a small store near the home of her child, whence she could daily sally forth for a while, to watch for, perhaps to see him.

When he became old enough to walk with his nurse in the park which fronted the Sitterly mansion, she was almost certain that on every fair day he would be brought at least once to that pleasant resort.

How she learned his usual hours for this recreation, how she habitually met him there, and, seated with her knitting or sewing upon a bench within the sound of the rustling fountain, attracted him to her side by kind words and smiles and gifts; and kept him there, enchained by stories, such as children love to hear—we have already seen.

Mrs. Binney did not at once take her son home, excepting for a visit of a few days. Seth desired to keep him for the present until he could make arrangements for a new home for the widow in a better neighborhood, and nearer to himself and Evelyn.

He expected, indeed, very soon to have a new home of his own, and he intended when that happy time came, that both Aunt Ally and her son should at once become members of his family.

He had already proposed it to Evelyn, who could not sufficiently express her delight at the arrangement; and who was impressed anew with Seth's goodness in making such calculations for her happiness.

Mr. Lynde had yet another of Evelyn's friends upon his hands, for whom also he designed to find a place in his new household. This was little Becky Vose, whose conduct on the trial had so incensed Mrs. Sitterly that she had at once dismissed her from her service; and whom Seth, knowing how destitute she was, and how much Evelyn was attached to her, had taken directly to his home.

There was, certainly, something very winning about Becky. She was quite too pretty, gentle and refined for a servant, and would have reflected credit, as a daughter, upon any family, however exalted. She and Herbert became warm friends, and their companionship proved a source of great delight to each of them.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Mr. Frederick Sitterly was really grieved for the loss of his wife; but he was far more deeply concerned for the other losses which it involved. The hopes which he and Blass had entertained, that Mrs. Sitterly's statement would not gain credence, and that it would be entirely unsupported by other proof were destined to a most speedy frustration.

When Mrs. Binney reclaimed her long lost son, and corroborated the whole story by all the details of her own compulsory connection with it, they saw plainly that all attempts to refute the accumulating proofs would be useless.

Where Hassel had gone, or at what moment he might reappear, to add his confession to the other evidence, already so conclusive, they could not tell.

Guilt had made a coward of Blass, and he feared hourly that he should somewhere encounter the semi-maniac, who might visit upon him some terrible retribution, for his part in the abduction which had been intended to terminate its victim's life, and which, even yet, by the sufferings it had produced, would apparently soon consummate that murderous design.

Simon had indeed flattered himself that the dangerous man knew nothing of his agency in the dreadful deed.

But Hassel, he knew, was shrewd and sagacious, and if, inflamed by revenge, he made diligent search for the pretended Huddleton; if from a Memory upon which Hate had burned a lasting likeness of his enemy, he could furnish such a minute account of him as should answer to the description of Rook, he would soon find those who would identify it as such.

From that point the connection would be obvious and readily traced. Rook, the law-partner of Blass—Blass, the brother-in-law of Mrs. Sitterly, here would be something to flash conviction on the wronged man, and point out to him one object on which to wreak his revenge.

Simon thought of all this; he thought of it the more and oftener because, although Hassel had seemed to take no especial notice of him when they confronted each other at Mrs. Sitterly's, he remembered afterwards that there had been a strange lighting of his eye and compression of his lips on that occasion. He recalled it with terror now—with a growing terror, for his mind, shadowed by the memory of his great guilt, had become weak; and he scarcely gave a thought to the loss of his large pecuniary hopes, by reason of the hourly dread which he now entertained for his life.

When Mr. Ira Harlow, therefore, came in manifest ecstacy to announce himself as the new owner of the great estate, (for the wonderful news, spreading everywhere like wildfire, had soon reached his obscure retirement,) Blass had no heart or courage to counsel even a show of resistance to his claims.

He was sure it would be useless in the end, and much more could evidently be made by a conditional capitulation, with a reservation of something solid for himself and Frederick.

The "coming man" was a burly, blustering fellow, coarse in feature as in mind, and as unable as undesirous to exhibit any delicacy in enforcing his rights.

He had been kept out of them long enough, he said, and if he had had the wit of a mouse he would have suspected and detected the fraud and villainy which had defeated him before.

Such a life of poverty as he had led ever since was enough, he said, to drive a man mad to think of; the best years of his life too! "You was in the game too, I have no doubt," he said to Blass, in his first interview with that person, whose hopes of making anything out of the new heir were somewhat dashed. "I remember you had a great deal to say about it."

"Really, Mr. Harlow, I cannot listen to such accusations——"

"Oh yes you can—and will. Somebody has got to pay me, too, for past receipts and wastes. Where has it all gone? fifty or sixty thousand dollars a year, and more, too, I dare say!"

"Couldn't say; I presume it has been legitimately spent."

"Oh, yes *legitimate!* Don't use that word; I don't think there has been anything *legitimate* about the affair anywhere, *I* don't—ha! ha! But I guess you have feathered your nest pretty well with it, any way."

"'Pon my honor, Mr. Harlow——"

"*Your* honor—oh, yes! come, that's rich now."

"I assure you, sir," replied the craven Simon, who was quite cowed by the bullying language of the rich boor, "I never knew of the fraud practised in regard to the heir—if indeed there was one."

"I don't believe it; if *you* didn't, your wife did. They were a precious pair—them sisters; I've heered a good deal about them, before one of 'em got to be so grand. And some people think old cousin Harlow didn't die a nat'ral death, either. 'Twant so much matter for him, for he was an old Turk, if he *was* a relation of mine."

"Well, well, Mr. Harlow——"

"Wait a minute. You profess to own the Holt place; you've got a deed of it from her. Much good it will do you. *That* belongs to me now; it is part of the estate. *She* never owned it 'cepting her dower in it, and that's gone now. And that pauper's brat there—*he* never owned it of course. It's worth forty thousand dollars to-day."

"Listen to me a minute: You haven't got possession of this estate yet, Mr. Harlow. The proof isn't so clear. Mrs. Sitterly was delirious half the time on the day she died—perfectly raving; perhaps she was raving when she told this story. There is but one other witness——"

"Yes there is—two. I know about Hassel. My lawyer has told me all about it. He's in the city somewhere, and I've got a 'tective looking him up. He's got to make affidavy to the hull story right off. Such a one as can be used in court, too—or he'll be put through in double quick time."

"But don't you see that if you deal friendly with us, we can put you in quiet and immediate possession, but otherwise we can keep you out of the property, and put you to a long and expensive litigation."

"You can't do it; I know better. If you can I'll buy you when I find you are worth buying, by thunder—not now. You've cheated me out of enough, and I'll have some of it back instead of paying you more. I can raise fifty thousand dollars to-day on this property—by a good shave—and fight you out of court with it in three months. You can't bluff me—I've played at that game——"

"Ah, come now! You may as well keep cool—just wait and see Mr. Sitterly, and we will talk it over more calmly over a bottle of wine and a lunch."

"No you don't. I don't want to see Fred. Sitterly—I know all about *him*, too. I don't want to see any of the race. I'll go my own way, and consult with my own friends, and not with them that have robbed me for ten years, and would do it agin if they can."

Ira did go his own way, and in the course of a few days his pilot-fish, the detective, led him to the quarters where poor Hassel was hiding from the threatened pursuit of Blass, a man who had barely mustered courage enough *to* threaten him, and who in his turn was daily trembling for fear of *him*.

Hassel seemed much alarmed by the menacing language of Harlow, and by the fact that he had an officer with him, whom he said he should leave there in charge of him until he had brought a lawyer to draw up his affidavit, and have it duly verified for future use.

"If you make a clean breast of it," he said, "and tell the hull story, you shan't be harmed, notwithstandin' all the harm you've done me. There's no use prosecutin' you—that's plain enough. You can't get anything of a cat but its skin. Ha! ha!"

But if the wretched man was alarmed, he was still more enraged.

"I *will* make a clean breast of it, never fear," he said. "I will tell the whole story."

"Not that it is so very important," added Ira. "There's proof enough without you; there's Mrs. Sitterly's dying declarations, and there's Mrs. Binney, who knows the hull story of course, and how much you paid for the brat. She's got part of the money yet, they say. She knows; she's watched that ere child every day since he was four weeks old—and opened her shop close by Sitterly's a purpose."

"No matter," said Hassel, interrupting the man; "I have told you I would make the affidavit, but *I* will choose the lawyer to draw it up, not you."

"I won't consent to that; leastways," he added, as he saw something like a look of defiance in his companion's face, "leastways, *I'll* have a lawyer here, too, to see it's all right and ship-shape."

"Twenty of them, if you please."

"Very well—my man is—I don't know him—I don't know his name—but——"

"Oh, that's queer, too."

"But it's the young chap that gave *her* such a rasping in court t'other day—Herbert's lawyer; bring *him!* I like *him*."

"Very well—but if you don't know his name, how can I tell who you mean. I wasn't at the trial, and I don't know anything about it."

"There were but two—two lawyers on Herbert's side—it was the young one. Bring *him*."

"All right; I will, and one more."

Seth wondered much at the summons—but he did not decline it. It was a regular piece of professional business for which Harlow, the heir, was to pay him, and he thought it might result in more retainers from the same source.

He went; he drew the affidavit, embodying a full, clear, and distinct account of the whole conspiracy—so full and distinct that both Harlow and his lawyer were perfectly satisfied with it.

Hassel signed it and swore to it, for a commissioner had also been brought to administer the oath.

"And now," said Hassel, turning to Seth and the other lawyer, "I have one thing more to say: I have made this confession, not, as this man thinks, because I have been bullied into it, but for other reasons."

"Never mind the reasons as long as you've done it," said Harlow.

"I do not think," he continued, "that I could depend an hour on *his* promise not to prosecute me, if he found it to his interest to break his word."

"Oh you don't, hey!"

"In my shattered state I believe I have not my usual courage, and I was frightened when first he found me—he and his policeman; but I believe I have little more to fear from man."

Hassel looked sadly at his wasted frame as he said this, and sighed.

"You do look rather shaky—fact," said Ira, as he folded up his precious document and prepared to go; but I dare say you'll last a few months, old chap, with good nursing."

"If I am to be prosecuted," continued the miserable man, without heeding the other, "by him or any one else—for any one can do it as well as he—my confession now will perhaps go in mitigation of my punishment. At any rate, the worst that can be done to me is to sentence me to imprisonment, which cannot last long, for death would soon release me."

"Without any jailer's fees, either," interposed Ira. "Hey, old boy."

"But I do not believe any one will think it worth while to trouble me—and if they do, I throw myself on your protection, young man, for I have seen how nobly you can defend the oppressed."

Seth looked surprised, and replied that he fully believed that Hassel, in his state of health, had no reason whatever to fear a prosecution. No one, he said, could have the heart to trouble one whom God had so evidently smitten. There was no one, either, who could now have any ends to gain by such a persecution."

The poor man seemed greatly relieved by this answer, and immediately said:

"Then I can the more freely perform one act of justice now, for I am sure it would be another crime for me to conceal what I am about to tell you."

"Hello! What else have you been doin' on, then? out with it, Doctor!" said Ira.

"What I have to say is this," added Hassel, still unheeding the boor's remarks: "*that this man is not the heir of Hugh Harlow!*"

"*What!*" shouted Ira, springing to his feet.

"Hugh Harlow left a sister!"

"It's a lie! a lie, in your throat!" said Ira. "She is dead—has been dead fifteen years."

"She *is* dead—but it's not yet *eight* years since her death. She left a child."

"It's as false as the Koran," said Harlow, while his flushed face and the swelling veins on his forehead, rising like cords, attested his excitement and alarm.

"It is as true as the Gospel," replied Hassel. "She was married to a man named *Vose*——"

"I know it! She died in the alms house."

"She did, but her daughter is still alive—or was a year ago. She was then about nine years of age; her name was Rebecca."

Seth had listened in speechless astonishment to this dispute; but when he heard little Becky Vose, Evelyn's pet and *protegé*, named as the heiress, his joy knew no bounds. Without disclosing his delight, or the reason for it, he closely question Hassel in regard to it, noting down the essential points of his replies, and especially the names of several persons, who, he said, knew the mother and child perfectly well, and could fully substantiate their relationship to the defunct broker.

Harlow raved meanwhile, and interrupted the examination with oaths and ribaldry—but Seth obtained what he wanted, and rose to retire.

"I should like to know," said Ira, "where this sister and her child were eleven years ago, when old cousin Hugh died. Why didn't they come forward then?"

"Eleven years ago the daughter wasn't born; where the mother was, it would be difficult to say. Probably she was in some alms house then, or in some obscure home, where she did not hear of her brother's death until the property question was all settled. If she had heard of it she would not be like to expect any thing from a brother who had allowed her to suffer so long."

"Well, if this infernal story is true, (and it would be jis like my luck,) there is one thing I can tell you any way: I'm that ere child's nearest relation, and I'll be guardian, and have the property all in my hands for the next ten or eleven years—and it will go hard if I aint a rich man at the end of that time. So you needn't crow over me, old Bones."

Ira departed in a rage, and Seth hastened home to communicate the extraordinary news to his family, and to send it to Evelyn.

Their astonishment and delight was of course beyond all expression, and as to Becky, she seemed unable to comprehend or believe the sudden and extraordinary change in her position.

The inebriate Ira proved to be quite as much abroad in his calculations about the guardianship, as he had been in his larger hopes. Mr. Silby advised Seth to apply at once for the position of guardian to the infant heiress, who was already in his charge, and offered to procure for him the necessary security, which of course was very large.

The dissipated cousin put in his claim, but when the question came up for decision, the proof of his habitual intemperance was sufficient to cause his immediate rejection, besides which, he was utterly unable to procure the bail which would have been necessary for his appointment.

Seth had anticipated that Mr. Sitterly might apply for the valuable post, but Silby assured him that the husband of the woman who, for ten years, had kept the true heiress out of her rights, would never have the presumption to make such an application, and that he would be instantly rejected if he did. He was right. The elegant Frederick did not put in his claim, and Seth was duly invested with the full control of the large estate, including, of course, the princely mansion from which Mr. Sitterly had politely expelled him a few years before.

Seth, of course, was soon on the high road to fortune. His trusteeship, highly lucrative in itself, even when executed with the strictest fidelity to the interests of his ward, was also the source of a large professional business, and he could look forward with something like certainty to a speedy independence.

He no longer hesitated to urge Evelyn to as early a fulfillment of her promises as was consistent with a proper respect for her unworthy father, who, whatever his actual sense of bereavement may have been, maintained the semblance of very deep grief. Evelyn had no longer to fear his opposition to her marriage.

He had been mistaken in Mr. Lynde, he said, who had really proved himself to have the ring of the true metal.

"We are all liable to mistakes, my daughter," said Frederick. "It has been mine not to perceive and appreciate the worth of this young man—ahem!"

Miss Sitterly was glad to receive kind words from her father, and a hearty approval of her marriage, and she was willing to shut her eyes to the utter worthlessness of these acknowledgments, extorted in his hour of abasement by the exaltation of his generous enemy.

As Seth, too, could afford to be magnanimous, he shut *his* eyes very tight indeed against the memory of Sitterly's past arrogance and cruelty, and against the spectacle of his present meanness and sycophancy.

About six months after Mrs. Sitterly's death, Seth bought a handsome, commodious house, (of course it was one which exactly suited Evelyn's tastes,) and having thoroughly furnished it, also in entire accordance with her views, Aunt Ally was put at once in possession, with a little household composed of Herbert and Becky, and two servants.

"I shall have one more bird for this cage," he said, "one more, Aunt Ally; a fortnight from to-day—remember."

"Everything shall be ready, Seth, never fear; and such a welcome as *she* will have! I do not know how I shall keep these little ones in their senses when she comes."

"Don't try it, Aunt Ally; let them go wild if they will, on that day."

Seth and Evelyn were married very quietly at church, and after a short wedding tour, they returned and took possession of their happy home. *How* happy they were, and how their joy was augmented by the memory of the trials through which they had passed, and which they had so patiently endured, may easily be imagined.

Seth permitted his father-in-law to occupy the great house until the May ensuing his wife's death; but of course he had no right to allow his continued residence there, as Sitterly had saved nothing, and was utterly without means to pay any adequate rent.

As Mrs. Sitterly had died deeply indebted to the heir, having spent a great many thousands more than her own proper income, her costly furniture all properly belonged to little Rebecca.

But she had verbally requested that if she owned anything it might be divided between her husband and Herbert; and Becky, who began to get some correct views of her own vast wealth, earnestly begged that this arrangement might be carried into effect in regard to the furniture.

Seth knew that he had strictly no right to be guided by his young ward's opinion; yet he felt a delicate reluctance in making a claim of this nature against his father-in-law, although it, of course, involved not a few thousand dollars.

But while he was absent on his wedding tour, the elegant Frederick cut this Gordian knot by selling the furniture, *en masse*, to a wealthy gentleman, who had rented the house; and he made a great show of honor, by promptly bringing half the purchase-money to Mr. Lynde, (on the day of his return,) for Herbert's benefit.

Seth did not consider it worth while to complain of this arrangement, more especially as Sitterly had pocketed his prize, and all objection would now have been useless.

As Frederick had also quietly appropriated all his wife's jewelry, he was far from destitute: though his capital was only large enough to produce about one-fourth of his accustomed personal expenditures.

Of course, it began rapidly to diminish; notwithstanding, he condescended to accept a home for a considerable part of his time with the son-in-law, whom he had once treated with so great contumely.

His subsequent history must be told in few words. He attempted another matrimonial speculation, and triumphing over several eager competitors, married the huge widow of a supposed very rich butcher, six months after the death of the latter, and before his estate was settled up. When it *was* settled up—and the losses resulting from some great cattle speculations were paid—it was found that the widow had nothing but Frederick; and as he, by this time, had nothing but her, they had a merry time of it.

But the new Mrs. Sitterly had at least a very high temper, and a very decided disposition to govern her husband, and to submit to dictation in nothing.

She had one son grown nearly to manhood, and as some of her late husband's creditors generously offered to advance her a small capital with which to resume business, she insisted on Sitterly and the young man opening a meat market.

It was the only business that *she* knew anything about, she said, and she wasn't going to live on other people, as long as she had any hands—and she certainly had very large ones.

Horrified at this proposition, Frederick utterly rebelled, but the market was opened nevertheless by the son, and the family lived partly on its avails, and partly on the generosity of Seth and Evelyn.

The distressed man at first resolved to run away; but he was nearly penniless, and knew not where to go, or what to do. But gradually he grew used to the new state of things—talked of the importance of "provision merchants" to community—and submitted to his destiny. Seth managed to procure for him some small political appointment, and he subsided into a fourth-rate ward politician, seedy and patriotic, and quite forgotten by his distinguished and aristocratic friends, whom he was now very glad to shun.

Blass, haunted by the fear of Hassel, and still more by the fear of being called to account for the avails of certain vacant lots, which he had sold off his slice of the estate, disposed of all his personal effects, and left the country a few months subsequent to the death of his sister-in-law.

He returned about three years afterwards, with an empty purse, and a nose of deepened hue; and after a few more years of such very low life, that even the humbled Sitterly would not speak to him in public, he died from the effects of a fight in a gambling house.

Rook, who had been "posted" on the subject of Hassel's return, was supposed never to have visited the city again; and Seth heard from a friend, who lived in the same distant State to which he had retreated, that after a career of somewhat singular land speculations, which at one time promised him great wealth, he "brought up" in State's Prison, for the liberal term of fifteen years.

Hassel himself, who had been such a bugbear to his two enemies, disappeared from the city, and enough uncertainty rested upon his fate to leave the cowardly Simon, after his return from abroad, still haunted, up to his last hour, by the fear of encountering him.

It became one of Seth's first professional duties, after getting rid of his great trial, to restore Mrs. Jerusha Bolt to her inheritance, which was effected with very little delay and trouble, and without litigation. Mrs. Smyth, indeed, though really greatly distressed, protested that she was *delighted* to see her sister-in-law alive, and wondered who could have perpetrated that "cruel hoax" upon her, about her death.

Seth's prosperity was so decided that notwithstanding other birds successively made their appearance in the cage which he had once pronounced full, he was abundantly able to bestow the most liberal education upon Herbert, whom, together with his mother, he always claimed to have adopted.

Mrs. Binney, like the new Mrs. Sitterly, had some notions of independence which forbade her quietly submitting to be supported by others, and she resisted long and strenuously, before she would consent to give up her store, which she said would enable her to pay both for her own and Herbert's maintenance.

But Seth succeeded in convincing her that her companionship and counsel were worth far more to Evelyn than any amount of money which she would ever pick up in her little triangular shop, and that she was really a most useful and indispensable part of his aviary.

Herbert's after years fulfilled all the bright promise of his childhood; and the wealth of affection which Evelyn had lavished upon him, and which was scarcely abated, even when new claimants came to share her love, was ever returned by him with that most considerate and thoughtful kindness, which showed, in a thousand varying ways, that his sister's happiness and welfare were always among the very foremost aims of his life.

But what shall be said of pretty little Becky, who had been so witching and winning while in the humblest sphere, and who had been so suddenly transformed to a position of great prospective influence and wealth. Only that she was sweet, innocent, lively Becky still, as fond of Evelyn as ever, and growing daily and yearly more attached to Herbert, until the years came when, with maiden delicacy, she saw that she might no longer manifest her fondness for him.

Seth and Evelyn, who had watched with delight the growing affection of the children, saw with smiles the coyish retirement of Becky, when the era of childhood began to disappear, and when the handsome Herbert, fresh from his first term at college, and his first absence from home, sought to re-establish their former intimacy.

Herbert saw it, too, with pain, but wisdom came with years, and all the experiences of love, and hope, and doubt—of bold and desperate proposal, of glad yet timid acceptance—which had marked the history of Seth and Evelyn's engagement, were re-enacted between this more fortunate pair.

No pains had been spared on Becky's education; she was as accomplished as she was beautiful, and notwithstanding the extreme poverty from which she had been rescued, the respectability of her parentage had never been impaired by vice or crime.

Misfortune had produced, and fraud had prolonged that destitution which had clouded her early years, and which had deprived her of parents of whom she retained none but the tenderest recollections.

Herbert graduated at the age of twenty, and entered Seth's office as a law student, for Mr. Lynde had by this time achieved such great celebrity as an advocate, that his profession naturally seemed dazzling and attractive to an ambitious and talented young man.

Soon after he became of age, he was married and went to Europe with his bride, and when they returned, the heiress being of age, there was, of course, no longer need of a guardian; and Seth gladly resigned his trust. He did not so gladly part with three loved members of his family, but doubtless his regrets were mollified by their parting tokens of regard and gratitude, which came in the shape of a very large accession to his already handsome fortune.

THE END.

BENEATH THE ELMS.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

Hugh and I sat beneath the elms at eventide. We were lovers, and the morrow was to separate us for a long time, how long we knew not.

On the porch our elders sat, in pleasant conversation; and we caught an undertone of sadness in their voices. They were Hugh's parents, my uncle and aunt, who had given me parental care and love since, an orphan babe, I had been sent to them from my mother's death-bed, almost sixteen years before.

Presently my aunt, the sister of my father, who was to take me away to the city on the morrow, joined them. A proud-looking, splendidly-dressed woman, bearing the prestige and the remnants of great beauty, she came and sat beside my Aunt McLeod, completely eclipsing, with her spreading lustrous flounces, her handsome and costly laces, and the gleams of a rich jewel or two, the sober plainness of that best of women.

She wore, too, something of a defiant air that brought the look of trouble to Aunt McLeod's sweet face, and something almost like a frown of impatience to that of my usually calm and unobservant uncle.

Aunt Shaw had never taken the least thought of me before. She was not fond of children, she said, and hearing that the McLeods had taken me home, on my mother's decease, she had known that I was sufficiently well cared for. But now that I was a child no longer, she felt it her duty to come forward and give me some advantages, such as I could not receive among these very respectable but decidedly unfashionable people. I must have a year or two at a fashionable school, or under a good finishing governess, and with masters. Then, my manners being formed, and sufficient accomplishments gained, she would introduce me into society where her position, and the knowledge I should have gained how to make the most of my good points, would speedily secure me a desirable match.

The next morning we set out for the city. Hugh, whose wife I had promised to be, was disconsolate at our separation. But it would not be for long, I said, and I would write and explain all. And so the good-bys were said, and I drove away beside my aunt, with all the dewy freshness and beauty of that loveliest of mid-summer mornings mocking the disquiet and impatient grief of my spirit.

* * * * * * *

Twenty years had passed ere I returned. And then how changed were all the material and spiritual aspects of my world. I went a thoughtless child of sixteen, with gay dreams of ambition flitting through my mind. I came back a woman of thirty-six, for whom life had no longer any hopes or any illusions. I went rich in friends, and joy, and love, in my abounding youth, in the charms of youthful form and feature, with all the world before me wherein to cull joys and experiences to deck my heart's home in the near hereafter. I came back poor, widowed, childless, hopeless, and friendless but for Hugh, glad to accept the home he offered me, and the post of housekeeper in his bachelor establishment, since I must earn my livelihood somewhere, and eighteen years of absence had made me a stranger in my own land.

Hugh, too, was changed into the tall, broad, burly man of forty, with grizzled locks, grave eye, and unsmiling mouth. Uncle and Aunt McLeod were dead, old servants likewise, and a new generation had sprung up who knew me not. Only the gray old gables remained the same, perhaps a little mossier than of old; even the elms had grown to more gigantic size, and quite hid the bench where certain never-forgotten words had been whispered. Hugh, a gentleman ever, in hodden gray or broadcloth, treated me with none of the old familiarity of our youthful days. He had his own avocations, I mine, and we went on our separate ways in unsympathizing silence, observing only those outward forms of civility which the veriest strangers adopt.

A few words will suffice for all the history of these years of absence.

Aunt Shaw's more powerful will had bent me to her purposes from the first, and when, in the second year of my residence with her, she proposed going abroad, I acquiesced, and even submitted without a murmur when she contrived to prevent my farewell visit to the Elms. Hugh had been prevented coming to me by the illness of his parents, and after I sailed I was shut out from all intercourse with him.

After a year or two Aunt Shaw left me in Europe. She had married me to a man whom I detested, having first inveigled me into giving him what, according to the code of etiquette in the country where we then lived, was encouragement that did not permit me to recede. She left me to misery, but she could comprehend no misery that a title and a palace could not heal. She died soon after, leaving me by her will all her wealth, but the heirs of her husband contested the instrument, and my husband, who became defendant in the suit that followed, being an alien and absent, they gained their cause. My husband had title, but no wealth, and we lived a wretched life when the hope was wrenched from us of succeeding to Aunt Shaw's estate. There were many years of this life—I have never cared to count how many. Children were born to me and died, and at last the man to whom false vows bound me, died too, and I was left alone, amidst strangers, in the land that had always been strange to me.

Then I came home to find my own land scarcely less strange, to meet coldness and contumely, and to feel myself reduced to humble my pride, and gladly accept the home Hugh offered me.

I had been near six months at the Elms when the mid-summer brought my thirty-sixth birthday. No word of this anniversary had passed my lips. Not for worlds would I have reminded Hugh of that sad time of temptation when I had forfeited my vows, and deserted him with the confession of love still glowing on my lips. But his memory was not less tenacious than my own. The morning of my birthday saw the gift left me by his dead mother laid beside my plate at breakfast, accompanied by his own—the one a costly shawl of rare lace, the other a clasp of pearls to fasten it at my still white throat. I had few words wherewith to thank my cousin, and he repelled my gratitude almost roughly, reminding me that his coffee was growing cold, and he could not loiter, since he must that day visit the market town. But I thought it but fancy that he glanced at me more kindly than his wont, and grasped the cold, trembling fingers I laid in his palm, with a not unfriendly clasp.

I had not known till that day how dearly the memory of my early love had been cherished. Amid the rush of memories and feeling which the day brought, no fact of my life stood out in clearer relief than my love for Hugh. I knew now why our cold, constrained mode of intercourse had been so exquisitely painful to me. I loved him still, and the conviction flashed upon me that I must leave the Elms, lest my secret be betrayed.

Hugh did not return at night. I sat alone upon the porch, the maids were in their own domain, the laborers at the farmhouse beyond the gate. So I stole away, and sought, for the first time in all those years, the bench beneath the elms.

How the dewy odor of flowers, how the heavy masses of verdure, how the shrill creak and whir of insect life, how the very tossing of branches between me and the moonlit azure of the sky, reminded me of that night, a score of years before, sacred in my innermost heart, to love and dreams of bliss! I sat down, leaned heavily against the rough bole of the tree, and wept. "There is no one to see me," I said, half aloud. "To-night I will weep, to-morrow the old marble calm, the outward aspect of hopelessness, will have returned."

And so I made my moan for my lost hopes, my wasted youth, my love that would never meet return! I thought the night alone heard my plaint, that the one moon-ray that peered through the dense foliage only beheld my grief.

But suddenly strong arms came, with indescribable gentleness, about me. Softly my head was placed to rest on a broad, warm breast. Tones, low and wooing, fell on my ear. I heard that I was still beloved, still dearer than all the world beside, and, with an influx of unutterable bliss I closed my eyes, and rested there content, for the time, to bathe my soul in that happy consciousness, to prolong the moment of my supreme joy.

Love and eternity have the same emblem: the circle—that never ends, that time changes not—is the symbol of both. And in that hour I learned that my thirty-six years, my faded beauty, my saddened being, had made no change in the love of Hugh McLeod. To him I was forever young as his love.

For twenty years I have been his true and happy wife, and our children whisper love tales beneath the elms, where their parents have seen their sorest griefs, their supremest joys.

THE WORLD WAS—YOU AND I.

BY FINLEY JOHNSON.

Oh, still do I remember, love,
Though many years have fled,
When Autumn's rustling leaves were crush'd
Beneath our bounding tread;
Oh, those, indeed, were joyous hours,
Hope's star was in the sky!
The angels smiled upon us then—
The world was—you and I.

The Autumn passed, and Winter came
With his destroying breath;
The flowers faded, one by one,
And slept the sleep of death;
But still the earth was passing fair—
An Eden to our eye;
Our hearts were always summer, love—
The world was—you and I.

'Tis true that we are parted now,
Yet from my inmost heart
The memories of the happy past
Time cannot make depart;
And when we, love, shall meet again,
I'll gaze within thine eye,
And dream of those bright hours when
The world was—you and I.

THE ONE ERROR.

A STORY FOR YOUNG WIVES.

CHAPTER XV.

DAME TIBBETTS'S STORY.

Nelly shook her head. "I know you mean well," she said, sadly; "you have been a true friend to me and my child! God alone knows what we should have done without your help, and I am sure you advise for my good, as you think, but if you could only know what I have suffered, and how much more I dreaded what might come, you would not speak as you do—*indeed* you would not!"

"And how canst thee be sure," said the dame, speaking very gravely, yet kindly, too; "how canst thee be certain but that, in trying to escape what thee sayest is so hard, thee mayst not get into worse danger?"

"It *cannot* be worse!" exclaimed Nelly; "nothing can be worse!"

The good woman held up her hand deprecatingly, as she said—

"Do not speak so; it does indeed grieve me sorely to hear thee rebel thus against the decrees of Providence—oh! bitter cause have I to remember the like words, many years ago, from one who, like thee, didst believe that worse could not be. Wilt thou have patience to hear me while I tell a sad tale that may teach thee a lesson as it did me, years since? for trouble is the lot of all in this world, my child, and hearing of others' affliction may make thine own seem lighter."

She paused, and seemed reflecting a few minutes; Nelly, her head resting upon her hand, offered neither answer nor objection, and the dame went on—

"Thou mayst have wondered, perhaps, to see this large and ancient house empty and forsaken, and its fruitful gardens all let run to waste, and no one to inhabit it but my niece Rachael and myself. It has been so now these twenty years past; Rachael can remember it no otherwise since she was born, and it is likely, when I am gone, the old place will fall utterly to ruin, and be no more inhabited at all, for there will be none to take the interest in it that I do, who was brought up here from a child.

"But I can remember it very, very different; I mind when every one of the great, rambling bedrooms was filled with guests, when titled gentlemen and young noble ladies were glad to lie in the humblest rooms of the servants, who had turned out into outhouses and closets to make room for the merry guests; when the fires never went out for weeks, and the big reception rooms were, night after night, all ablaze with lights, and filled with music, and dancing, and feasting, and the great halls, and courts, and garden grounds were all too small for the games and diversions that were carried on among them.

"There was not much soberness nor good thoughts then, I am afraid, and a deal of waste—a deal of waste and ungodly frivolity went forward, I fear a great deal," the old woman sighed.

"That was in the time of the Despards, the last but one, Luke Despard—it is the name of the family who have held the place for hundreds of years—though thee wouldst not know of it, in truth; and for as many years have mine, father and son, mother and child, served their house in one office and another, as in my turn I came to do.

"They were a proud family, and haughty, too, yet in no ways harsh nor unjust. They could hold each his own, yet would have trespassed on no man's due, and to their dependents and inferiors were most liberal and considerate.

"I speak now, as in my better mind, God be praised, I can feel, calmly, and I do hope, justly, and with no over-excess. In those days, alas! I fear my heart was filled with a vain and worldly pride and worship of the house to which I belonged, and my fathers and mothers before me glorified their exceeding power and magnificence, as if it reflected on me and mine, and saw only the might and triumph of the creature, in what was indeed but His exceeding bounty to a highly-favored race.

"But I was not to tell thee of myself, but of her I served.

"Sir Luke Despard died, and left one son, Sir Walter, who had been married not many months before to a high-born and proud lady, an heiress she was, and the last of a mighty family in the north.

"Sir Luke thought vastly of her, and I do think it was more of his persuasion and desire that Sir Walter had been won to make her his wife, for she was the very opposite to himself.

"As I said, it was in Sir Luke's time the splendor and the gaiety, and the luxury was that I call to mind—being a young girl then, and just entering into the enjoyment of such things. My mother, too, believed in the name of Despard, and brought me up, heaven forgive her, more in the fear and love of it than in that of the Lord, so it was scarcely wonderful I should, at her death—she died early, too, of a fever, brought on by over-fatigue in a great hunting carouse of a month that Sir Luke gave—it was natural, I say, that I should fill her place at once, and take on me, too, all her partiality and devotedness to my masters, and I fear me that, with many others, I thought more of Sir Luke, with his jovial, blustering, hearty, free-living ways, than I did of the young heir, Master Walter, gentle and kind, and thoughtful for the lowest thing that lived—a true Christian gentleman as he was. But he suited not the wild ways of Despard Court as it then was."

The dame paused, sighed, and shook her head. Nelly, whose interest had been fixed by her recital, turned towards the good woman, and, by her eyes, evinced how deeply her attention had been engaged.

Dame Tibbetts saw it, and, in a more confident voice, she continued:

"With his music, and his books, and the studying of the stars, and plants, and insects, Master Walter pleased himself day after day, and seemed to flee more and more from the frivolities and mummery that, for the most part, diverted the guests of Despard Court. It vexed his father mightily, that we knew, all of us; and Master Walter, who loved the old man as well as ever a son could, did strive and overcome very frequently his own fancies to please Sir Luke; even, as I have said, to the marrying of the proud and haughty lady that was indeed to him as the sunshine on a polished steel to the moon out on the lake yonder. These are the very words that I have heard said of them by a young gentleman that was over at the Court; a poet they said he was, though I always believed him to be someway wrong in his wits, poor body!

"However, they were married, and, soon after, Sir Luke died, unexpectedly and sudden.

"Sir Walter—that was 'Sir' Walter then—he grieved beyond what I have ever seen for his father, and then first was shown the nature of my lady, for she quite, one might say, scoffed at his sorrow, and seemed impatient of the mourning that for a while put an end to the feasting and gammocks at the Court, taking every occasion to use such possible liberty in the way of pleasuring that she dared, and casting off the black clothes as soon as ever the time was barely up.

"We could not but see this, all of us, and some even went so far as to whisper that my lady had no heart; but she was a Despard, and most of us could see no wrong in whatever might be done by one of the name.

"It has been made plain enough to me since that she had little or no love for Sir Walter; but the family was an ancient one, and wealthy, with such estates as a prince might be proud of, and my lady, I take it, was not averse to joining her own name to one that stood so high.

"But it was seen every day more clear how unsuited they were to have paired, and that, indeed, my lady strove little to hide the contempt she felt for a husband that was so quiet and gentle, shunning all the riot and display that she gloried in, and from which he never sought to hinder her, in truth.

"A son was born, and, as my lady had fixed it should be, he was named, not after his own father, Sir Walter, but after my lady's grandfather, 'Mountjoy Victor Lineage.'

"Certain I am, and was at the time, that Sir Walter strove against it, and would have had his boy called after his own father, Luke; but *she* willed it, and he never held out against her long. Indeed, what man could have heart to do so, seeing the very need of strife may tell him how little he is cared for?

"But that was a small matter to what came after. My lady was far too grand to suckle her infant herself, and would have had over a fine foreign nurse she had a hankering for, but it so happened I had just lost my own baby, and I believe in my heart, God forgive me, I did not grieve so much for the loss of my own as I was glad it gave me the means of serving my master's house.

"He came to me then, and, almost with tears, he asked of me to take the mother's place to his hapless little son.

"I believe it was more of something the doctors told her, than anything, that my lady was moved to give way to my offer of my services, but she did, and the dear little boy became like my own, and like my own I loved him till his death."

The old woman's voice had been failing during her last words, and she now gave way, as the tears dropped slowly from her eyes upon the snow-white handkerchief pinned across her bosom.

"Did you never have any more of your own?" asked Nelly.

The dame shook her head, slowly wiped her eyes, and then, in a voice that by an effort became quite calm, she proceeded—

"If ever there was a comfort and a blessing sent visibly and in the flesh to a saddened heart, that child was one to my dear master. When he was even a baby, at such time when men are not wont to take heed of children, Sir Walter would spend hours with his little son, and, I believe, the good man pleased himself, even then, with the fancy that he was guiding the spirit of his child on the right path, and leading him betimes to better things.

"Often and often have I known my dear master to leave some grand masque or entertainment, which my lady did so dearly delight in, to come and speak to me of his boy, and make mention of divers plans and projects which he had in consideration for the welfare of the child; and, though he never hinted at aught tending thereto, I knew that his chief anxiety was how best to keep the child out of the influence of his mother and those she brought about her. But I can tell now, though, then, I little heeded such things, that Sir Walter put his trust in a surer judgment than his own, and so made his mind easier on the subject of his son.

"It would have been all one, thee seest, if he had fretted and been ill at ease about it. It was willed that he was not to be tried in the matter.

"A wet and sultry season had brought on autumn fever and ague. In the village down below there, among Sir Walter's tenants, it was dreadful; and two of the huntsmen and a groom caught it, and, by my lady's orders, were removed there; for she was dreadfully alarmed, and would have fled from the Court at once, but that Sir Walter did then interpose his word, and refuse to quit the Court so long as any of his people were in danger.

"Ah! my dear master, a less Christian and kindly-hearted gentleman, might have escaped; but the ways of the Lord are hard to understand, and it is in vain for us, His creatures, to murmur and rebel.

"Sir Walter would not be persuaded to avoid the chance of contagion; in one of his visits to the village he took the fever, and soon was at the worst.

"All the care and attention we could bestow, all the skill of the best doctors was in vain. And if he could have rallied from the weakness which the fever had brought him to, he never could, from the news that his wife had left the Court in dread of the fever, and had gone to the house of her sister, a great lady, very rich, who had a house at Hampton, near London.

"He never bade them send for her, nor even made any request for her after, but bade me bring the child to his bedside. She was in too much haste to encumber herself with the babe, and I think I should have hardly let it go, if she had wished.

"It was a sad day for us all!' the dame went on, hurriedly; "we felt that the bright times for Despard Court were going from it; and when he blessed the boy, and whispered his last wishes and prayers for it, with its little hands in his, I know not how it was, but something weighed heavy on my heart and hardly let me hope.

"My lady pretended to be awfully struck by her husband's death, and went into the deepest of weeds; and, saying she could not bear the sight of the place, she went abroad with some of her great friends, and left only a few of the servants at the Court, and the little boy to my care. It was a dreary time, and would have been worse to me, who was a widow then, but the sweet child was the light of the shut-up, forsaken Court, and we all loved him.

"I often thought as I watched him grow, and marked his pretty ways, that the spirit of the old Despards seemed to have gone out with Sir Luke, for little Sir Mountjoy was even more quiet and gentle than his father, taking chief delight in flowers and birds, and in some books of poetry and fables of the heathenish gods and goddesses, which I should, maybe, have taken from him, but I had no heart to deny the sweet child anything; he never fretting, nor making complaint after any one thing, such as boys are apt to desire, but seeming best pleased in giving pleasure, even to us his servants.

"I make no doubt but the sadness and softness of his ways was in a measure helped by the gloom and quiet of the place, where we all lived, the dear child, too, more like prisoners, than like a noble Court of which he was the heir.

"I confess I would have been glad to see somewhat more of the old spirit of the Despards in the young heir, and often wondered how my lady would take it; but the dear child grew so in gentleness and love, and seemed to shrink with such aversion from anything like harsh or boisterous sports, that I gave up any attempts, save to meet all his few desires as best we could.

"We frequently heard from my lady with many messages of her intentions to come to reside at the Court, which had, more than once, been prepared for her reception; then again she would desire that Sir Mountjoy might be sent to her; and, after all, that order would be countermanded.

"But all at once she came, when we were but barely prepared for her; with her full retinue of servants, and a host of people to bear her company; and we learned she had now indeed come to settle at the Court, and take its future master under her own care and guidance.

"I had at times fancied my lady would be disappointed in her son, though she had left him so long to himself that it might be well supposed she had ceased to care aught about him.

"But I had not looked for the rage and fury she showed when she quickly found the temper and habits of her child.

"She sent for me—upbraided *me* with what she called his girlish, puling, menial tastes and inclination.

"'It is with your milk, woman!' she said, her eyes all afire with rage, 'that he has sucked in his nature; unless, indeed, you have changed him! and he is no son of mine at all! *Mine! my* son,' she kept repeating. 'A Mountjoy! a Despard! Bah! he is *not* my child.'

"As soon as I dared, I ventured to put in a word. I reminded my lady that my young master had been instructed as she had requested, by the clergyman; that he was by no means backward in his learning; that he was indeed timid, but that he had lacked companions of his own age.' She would not hear me to the end, but dashed in with her fierce, haughty voice, as she tramped up and down the room like a wild thing at bay

"'Timid! why, he's no boy at all,' she cried out; 'a needle or a tatting-mesh would befit his puny hands sooner than a sword or even the hunting-horn yonder of old Sir Luke. 'Tis a girl I brought into the world surely, and no son; but I might have looked for it,' she went on, insultingly; 'he was suckled by a menial, and the habits and spirit of a menial he hath, thanks to the silly whim of a maudlin father. But we shall see—we shall see if we cannot yet make something more than a muffet out of the pretty milksop you have reared me.'

"I got away as soon as I could, for I felt there was evil in store for my dear child, and I began to fear I had someway been wrong, though God knows I had tried to do my duty.

"But this was only the beginning; the haughty woman was bent on making the boy worthy of the name he bore, so she said; she scorned the idea of the inheritor of her ancestors failing in warlike spirit and boldness, and she swore Sir Mountjoy should become what she willed.

"The good clergyman who had helped in the teaching of the young baronet often talked with her, and showed her the vanity of contending with the will of our Maker.

"'For,' he said, 'if He so willed that your son should not excel in manly and bold acquirements, you cannot, my lady, thwart His decree to good purpose, of that be sure.' But she heeded none, only she would have her own desire, and to college and abroad the little lad should go forthwith.

"I mind how the poor child clung about me when first this was made known to him, begging of me to save him; and even went down upon his knees to her, and kissed her hands, and promised to be all she could wish, if she would but let him stay at home with his birds and flowers, and everything he loved.

"I think I see that proud face, as she walked into the child's room one morning, where he stood chirruping and toying with some rare birds that had been brought from some outlandish place beyond the seas.

"Her beautiful eyes flashed, ay, such a cruel light, and she called to a gardener who was outside on the terrace-walk, and bid him take 'those foolish toys and wring their necks.'

"So he did, not daring to disobey, and she, never heeding her child's cries, and pitiful entreaties for his pets, when the man, not liking to struggle with his young master, she grasped in her white hands the other bird, and handed it over to the servant, who carried them away and did her bidding.

"'You shall have fitter toys, Sir Mountjoy, than those,' she said, 'or will you put on girl's garments, since you would fain have their sports?' The poor boy ran to fling himself on my bosom, nigh in convulsions, and stopped his ears, and still said he heard the cries of the poor birds as they were strangled. I hushed him in a while, but he complained much of his head, even for days after, and nothing would arouse him to mirth.

"Three months after that my lady sent him to a great school or college, a long distance off, where, besides all book-learning, he was to be made a soldier and a gentleman, and to forget, as my lady said, that he had been nursed at the breast of a rustic serving-maid.

"From time to time I heard of my dear foster-child, through the good clergyman—chaplain he was now to my lady—the dear boy was doing well, they said, and made wondrous progress. But I never learned where he was, or I would have found a way to see the child of my love. Oh, me!

"It was about a year since his leaving us, and my lady was expecting her son daily, and, as the chaplain told me, he had won all the prizes, and had obtained great honor.

"Thee mayst think, child, how, with no other thing to love, I pined for a sight of my foster-child, and counted the hours till he should come.

"My lady was sent for in the night, post haste; and, by the hurry of her journey, evil tidings must have come we knew not of.

"The next day, she sent back for her chaplain, that he should join her, and, on the fourth day, they both returned, bringing my dear foster-boy, my young master, Sir Mountjoy—ah, me, that I could see it and live—a hopeless, helpless idiot!

"Thee mayst think, child, better than I can tell, of my lady's fearful grief and despair!

"She would fain have laid blame on any other than herself, but that was not permitted, for some of the gentlemen of the college had hastened to come, with purpose of doing all they could, and had with them skilled doctors to the poor young baronet; and those gave it as their opinion, not to be doubted, that the brain of that dear lad had been suddenly hurt or borne in upon, nay, I cannot call to mind the words they used, but so much I did make clear, that on his gentle and not too robust nature, the shock that had been given by the slaughter of his pets before his eyes, had done grievous hurt, and no time left to heal, or repose to soothe, but urged on to tasks he was perhaps but ill fitted to perform; so they said the brain had given way, and softened, and—my child was lost to me, and her son to the proud lady for ever!"

There was a pause of some minutes; then more slowly the dame went on:

"Sir Mountjoy only lived two years after, and indeed, it was small cause to grieve when we laid him to rest.

"He never knew any of us again. Only at times a dim recollection of the lady, his mother, seemed to affect him, to unseemly gibbering and complaint, moaning, as if in great dread, till she left him.

"Much as I disliked and feared her, I learned to pity her—indeed, my dear, I did, and so wouldst thou. Her life was a bitterness, and her death a warning.

"Then came lawsuits, and quarrelling, and a dividing of the estates, and the Court, that I first knew, as I have told thee, brave, and gay, and ungodly, became a wilderness—unmourned and uncared for—haunted, the people round about believe—but, ay, I often think that nought could haunt it worse than the things I have known within these walls."

"And you are always so, always alone in it?" asked Nelly.

"For twelve years, Rachael and myself have dwelt alone here. The last of the old servants left it then, but I never shall; and, if she should quit me, I shall stay here alone till my last hour. Rachael, too, was born here; she is not my relation, but the child of a poor servant maid, who died at her birth."

The dame said no more. The tale was ended, and she left her listener to make the application of its lesson to her own case.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE REFLECTION IN THE SKY.

How little she had done so, or to what small result, might be learned from a dialogue the dame held with her protégé.

"She will go, then? she is fixed yet on her journey forward, Rachael?" asked the dame, earnestly.

"Yes, aunt; and, indeed, I do pity her—to see how she trembles and quakes at the slightest sound; and she seems afraid to trust the child out of her sight, even with me, to the garden. Oh, the poor thing has been hardly used, aunt, it must be——"

"Indeed I doubt it not, Rachael, child," said the dame, with a sigh.

"I awoke last night," continued the girl, "and I heard a sobbing voice, as if in prayer. I raised myself just so that I could see her bed. She had arisen, and was kneeling on the floor by the side where her little girl was sleeping. Poor thing! she did so weep and moan, and pray, too—though I heard not what she said. Oh, aunt, but it seems a heavy burden on one so young and so gentle."

"There have been as heavy, my child, and laid upon as fair, ere this, Rachael. I have said all I mind to say, and have told this wife what seems to me her duty."

"She will never go back, aunt, she says so—even though she dropped upon the road."

"Is that a mother's duty, doth thee think, my girl?"

"Poor little Ida! she seems as terrified, too, at the idea of a return to Deepgang, aunt. He must be a fearful man, whoever he is."

"Niece, thee wilt tell this stranger, and not harshly—but I need not say that to thee—that we have rendered her all the aid we could, as one fallen into sore distress: her body is restored to health, and I would I could have rejoiced in the healing of her spirit likewise. But, my child, we can no further meddle in this matter. It is a grievous sin to come, in any fashion, betwixt man and wife, and one in which God forbid thee or I should have part."

"Aunt!" the young woman began, but the elder one stayed her by a movement of her hand, and, as she spoke, her face assumed a stern expression, which seemed as unnatural to it as would a steel helmet upon her venerable, gray-sprinkled locks.

"Thou wilt tell her, then, Rachael, that, since she is bent on continuing her journey from her native home, we can, neither by counsel nor company, aid her further. It never shall be said that the last remains even of the poor house of Despard did favor an act against God's law and man's, or helped a woman to rebel against her lawful master."

"But, aunt, can it be right—a man that is so cruel—how *can* she bear it?"

"A burthen that is not felt, child, is surely none—a duty that is pleasant there is surely no self-chastisement in fulfilling it. Is this the lesson He came to teach, that we shirk from the cross, and rebel against the thorns?"

The girl bent her head like a child rebuked. She knew of old the stern purpose to which her aged benefactress could arouse herself, in the fire of her self-denying zeal.

"Yes, aunt," was all the answer she made, when the dame had concluded with a request that was, indeed, little needed, that Rachael would be in no way harsh, but assure the "poor, mistaken stranger" of their earnest prayers in her behalf, that she might be brought to see the right path, and to return, ere it was too late.

Perhaps the good dame had a shrewd suspicion of how far her uncompromising justice was tempered by mercy in the administration, and might have succeeded, in her edicts, by so much as she guessed they would be softened down and curtailed in the execution. Certain it is that in Nelly's farewell the following evening there mingled more of fervent blessings and grateful utterances than Dame Tibbetts could have well looked for, had her words been literally conveyed. Certain, too, it is that the strangers went out by no means bare from the gates which had opened so providentially to receive them, and it really was a singular coincidence if the small country wagon, which came up with stores once a week, only happened to be just quitting the porch, where its stout horses and burly young driver had been regaling themselves since sunset. At any rate, though he (the driver) could have had no conscientious scruples against offering the mother and her child a lift in his almost empty vehicle, he might not have done it with so good a grace had there been no such person in the world as Rachael, old dame Tibbetts's niece, who had kissed them both at parting, and hung about Ida's throat a tiny string of pearly beads, almost the only ornament she herself had ever possessed. So once more they started upon their journey.

Nelly had chosen the evening in which to start, and Rachael had, in private, coincided with her. It was getting dusk, and the child, after prattling of the wonders she had been shown by her kind friend, soon fell asleep.

Her mother, whom many anxieties forbade to seek such relief, sat keenly awake to every sound, or, rather, *for* the sounds which rarely broke the stillness.

They were winding their way among green lanes again, then toiled slowly up a hill, and again as slowly descended into a valley.

Rachael had informed her that the wagon would go to a town some seven miles distant, as she believed, on the road to London.

Nelly had once said, and quite upon the spur of circumstance, that she was going to London, and now the word seemed to have shaped itself into her inevitable goal.

"And why not?" she thought, as she huddled among the hay in the bottom of the wagon, and shrunk, even there, into as small a space as possible. "I have heard it is a great place, and that even next-door neighbors know nothing of one another; besides, people who want work go to London, and seem all to get on. Yes, there we can hide ourselves, and there I shall, perhaps, get something for us both to live by—only never to meet with him—only to be safe from the horrible——"

"Hie!—Whoa!—Gee-whoa!"

A loud exclamation from the driver, and a sudden jolt of the vehicle as it came to a stand-still, broke the course of her meditations.

"Hey! Lauk-a-mussy! Phew!" uttering a variety of exclamations, the man stooped down to the canvas opening of the wagon.

"I zey, missus! here be a blaze somewheres!—lookee, the sky's all a-flame, like—there it goes, bang! phew!—there'll be gunpowder, surely—eh? see there!—*what* a blaze!"

She had put forth her head, and beheld far, far away over the hills inland, towards the coast, a lurid glow, that, reflected from the horizon, spread upward to the skies above them, and seemed to increase in anger and intenseness every instant, while, at intervals, a deeper flush, and the white mass of smoke that rolled out and partially dimmed the fiery glow, seemed to announce some sudden impetus or kindling of a fiercer combustible.

"It's by the Point, near about," said the man, "but that be no beacon fire, not it."

"How it does burn! Oh, it is very dreadful!" said Nelly, for the moment excited beyond the memory of her own situation. "But it is very far off. Ha! what was that?" she cried, as a loud explosion burst upon the air, and rolled from hill to hill like thunder.

"It be a blowing up, that," he said, then, slapping his leg, he cried, "Why, if it beant over at Deepgang, I'm a dummel! Ay, and for a pot, it be they darned smugglers at their tricks again."

"Deepgang!" She echoed the word, and fell back beside her child, within the corner of their poor refuge. To be continued.

* * *

THERE IS NO PLACE LIKE HOME.

BY AN AMERICAN LADY IN EUROPE.

The fair city—the brave city—
Oh strong its walls may be,
And yet I entered them, and found
That banner over the sea.

"There lies Conway Castle," said my guide; and, standing up in the carriage, I looked out eagerly. The Welsh town of Conway lies within the ivied walls of the ancient courtyard, and as we drove under the first arch, the ruins were straight before us. From moldered turret, broken stairs, and crumbling tower the ivy hung luxuriantly; the figures of visitors, upon the heights, seemed like pigmies, as they stood out against the clear blue sky. There were many there; a sound of gay voices and laughter came towards us as we drove up the street, and I caught myself wondering why the desolate beauty of the place had no power to check them, forgetting that there are those who can jest even upon the borders of a fresh-closed grave.

It was a bright, fair day in the middle of September, and the tide was coming slowly up, just beyond the moated walls. I stood a moment, as we left the carriage, looking at the wet shining sands, and then followed my companions toward the castle gates. As I did so something met my eyes that made me flush up and tremble, and feel a choking sensation at my throat. Only a faded flag hanging from the windows of an artist, who had taken up his quarters in the old rooms above the moat! It was torn here and there, and shabby and soiled—but, oh, it was the flag of my own dear country, and meeting with it there so unexpectedly, was like seeing the face of an old familiar friend! I took off the gipsy hat I wore, the tears sprung to my eyes, as I bowed to the ensign of liberty—the dear old "stars and stripes." My English friends smiled, and hurried me up the stone stairs; but wherever I went that banner floated before my eyes. I saw it as I looked from the battlements upon the distant sea—it was planted in the courtyard among the groups of sketchers, who were scattered there; it waved from the towers; it fluttered from the wall, and with it came the thoughts of home, and all who once loved me there. As the day declined we entered the ruined chapel, whose one window and flight of stone steps leading to it, is still entire. There my friends left me while they went to order the carriage and make some purchases at the "Honey Fair," which was held that day within the town. I sat down in the casement, where doubtless many a lady—far more highly honored than I—had whiled away an hour in the days gone by, and I looked out upon the "sad sea waves," and even upon the streets of the town, filled with quaintly dressed people, and thought not so much of what was passing around me, or of what had been within those very walls, as of what I had seen, and known, and felt in that land beyond the ocean, which I shall never see again. Not one of your names were forgotten, oh friends of mine; not one scene with which those names were linked. The village streets of Woodstock, and the home of my childhood, with its garden, its maples, and its graceful tamarac tree; the school of Shetford, and its village church; the sea-side cottage and the "lakes of Lynn;" the winter homes in Boston and New York; the summer retreats among the green hills of New Hampshire, or the Highlands of the Hudson; the white walls of "Gan-Eden," that sweet spot where, for two happy months, I found such rest and peace as I had never known before, all these came up before me, and I put away my pride, and leaning my face upon my hands, I let the tears flow quietly, for the sake of home. Oh, well may the lonely wanderer lie down and die when he hears the Ranz des Vaches in a foreign land; well might the maker of the Limerick bells ("those evening bells! those evening bells!") close his eyes and draw his last breath, when, after a long and weary exile from his darlings, he sailed up the stream, and heard their melody once more! Well might Howard Payne, wandering homeless and alone through the streets, as the night came on, go back to his desolate room, and write that sweet, sad song which every one knows. "There's no place like home!" There *is* no place like home; no land like thee, my own America! Within this year of exile, I have seen many another; I have known many pleasures, and won and lost many joys; but the grand old homes and the quiet cottages of England, the heathery moors of Scotland, the verdure of the Emerald Isle, the summer gardens of Germany, the vineyards of France, and the hills of Wales, what are they all to thee? Not once, not once among their fairest scenes have I felt that rapturous stirring at the heart, that I felt when, coming down from Conway Castle that evening, while the moon and stars shone brightly, I stopped beneath my country's flag, and pressing the faded silk to my lips, wetting it with my tears, said, from my heart, as now: "God bless that native land of mine! God bless the Stripes and Stars!"

SONG.

BY ALICE CARY.

O to be back in the pleasant fields
To which my thoughts are going—
In some still place across my face
To feel the west wind blowing,
And to let my song run wild along
Like dewberries through the mowing!

O to feel my heart once more
Beating light as a feather—
To see the bushes alive with blushes
Through all the warm May weather–
And O to lie, the wind and I,
On the ground, and sing together!

O to be under the apple trees
With flowers about me snowing,
And over the valleys sunny with lilies
To keep my glad tune flowing,
And to let my song run wild along
Like dewberries through the mowing!

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JEAN BRUNO AND THE GUERILLAS.

BY DR. S. COMPTON SMITH.

Many who took part in the Mexican campaign, with Taylor's command, will doubtless recollect among the quartermaster's men, occupied at Monterey, a somewhat noted express rider of the name of Jean Bruno.

They will the more readily call him to mind from the fact of his having lost one arm—I think it was the right one—and also from the dashing appearance he always made on horseback, being invariably mounted on the most spirited and unbroken nags in the quartermaster's stables. These noble animals he managed with the skillfulness of a ranchero, frequently using his teeth to assist his one hand in the control of them.

Jean was a Frenchman, who had seen service in Algeria, and had rendered himself quite famous on our line by numerous daring feats, such as conveying important despatches where no other express riders could be induced to venture, cutting his way, single-handed and alone, through the enemy's pickets, charging in darkness through their camps and bivouacs, and by numerous consequent hairbreadth escapes, in one of which he received the wound making necessary the amputation of the limb referred to.

Our little Frenchman was one of those constitutionally brave men, who never experience the sensation of fear. In fact, he had little idea of the word. Yet withal he was possessed of much prudence in dangerous positions, with a ready invention which carried him safely through them. He used to say—

"Let me but select my own horse, and give me a brace of trusty revolvers and a dragoon sabre, and I will guarantee to ride from Monterey to the city of Mexico, and if need be, pass every camp of the enemy on my way!"

As extravagant as was this boast of the Frenchman, I have no doubt he would cheerfully have undertaken it, had he been so ordered.

At that anxious period, shortly previous to the decisive battle of Buena Vista, when the handful of volunteers left to garrison the city of Monterey were surrounded by more than ten times their own numbers, and when the dust of the enemy's columns was seen in every direction during the day, and through the night every hill top and mountain side was illuminated by their signal fires, it became necessary to convey important intelligence to the small command of Colonel Morgan, still occupying Serralvo, the half-way dépôt between Monterey and Comargo.

But so vigilant were the enemy, and so closely had they beset the roads, that it was considered not only extremely hazardous, but almost impossible, to open a communication with that post.

The express men in the place were offered large rewards to induce some one or more of them to undertake the perilous journey, but there were none among them who would run the gauntlet. Had Jean Bruno been at hand, the application would not have been made in vain. But that courageous man was absent at Saltillo, whither he had been sent with despatches to General Taylor.

The quartermaster now made a requisition upon the First Ohio Regiment, quartered in the plaza, and two young privates immediately volunteered to attempt the passage.

The services of these brave fellows were gladly accepted, and provided with excellent horses and well armed, they set forth upon their perilous ride.

Scarcely, however, had the Ohioans left the plaza, when that fearless and faithful expressman, Jean Bruno, accompanied by a Mexican guide, galloped up to the commandant's quarters, with return despatches from head-quarters.

As the officer had all confidence in the skill and experience of the Frenchman, he hardly gave him time to dismount from his panting steed, when, ordering a fresh animal, he requested Jean to start forthwith, with a duplicate of the despatch that had been given to the Ohioans. Ever ready to give a cheerful obedience to all orders, the Frenchman snatched a few mouthfuls of refreshment with his guide, and was soon again dashing, with him in company, out of the city.

It was his intention, if possible, to overtake the young men, who had preceded him, in order to ascertain what route they purposed to pursue; as he had determined to follow a different path, in order that should one party fail, the other might possibly succeed in reaching their destination. Besides, the chances were that either would be more likely to pass the outposts of the enemy undiscovered, than if they united their numbers.

Jean and his guide, however, had crossed the ford of Agua Frio without falling in with the Ohioans, who, in obedience to instructions, had ridden rapidly, till past the first line of Mexican pickets.

Beyond this stream, coming upon hard, gravelly soil, Jean lost sight of their horses' tracks; and under the guidance of his trusty and experienced companion, left the main wagon road, and struck out into a narrow, and rarely traveled mule trail, which leading directly across the mountains, would take them, by a nearer rout, to Serralvo.

The distance was some seventy miles by the road, and twenty less by the mountain path; and by this route the guide assured Jean, they would altogether avoid the pickets and scouts of the Mexicans.

The two men had ridden but a few miles on the trail, when they came again upon the tracks of the Ohioans' horses. These were readily distinguished, from the fact that Mexican horses were never shod. It seems that the young men, who had frequently passed between Monterey and Serralvo, had heard of this short cut, and had now taken it.

For hours the Frenchman and guide rode along; now ascending some precipitous peak; then winding slowly along the verge of some overhanging cliff; and anon galloping through some little grassy valley, watered by mountain streams, when they would rest for a few moments to refresh their animals upon the rich herbage.

At length night overtook the travelers still upon the mountain path; and Jose, the guide, proposed that they should draw rein at a sheep rancho not far ahead, and await the return of day. Their route was dangerous in the obscurity, and Jean, unsuspicious of harm among the simple rancheros, consented.

As they reached the place, which with its range of substantial buildings, surrounded by a high adobe wall, had more the character of a hacienda of some wealthy proprietor, than an ordinary sheep farm, they found the gates shut, and all about the place apparently retired to sleep.

After calling several times, and knocking upon the gate, they heard voices within, and then a light appeared, at one of the unglazed windows, soon after which, they heard the removal of bars, and then the door being opened, they were invited, in a very friendly manner, to enter.

They found themselves in a sort of court, within which were several horses, two of which, that appeared to have been freshly arrived, Jean had no doubt were American horses, and belonged to his friends, who had preceded him.

On the threshold of the house, the travelers were met by an old Mexican, who with an hospitable smile, bid them a happy evening, and politely motioned them to enter.

Returning the salutation, Jean inquired if two Americans had not recently arrived.

"No," replied the Mexican, "we have seen no such persons, and they cannot have passed our place. Had they come, they would have been as welcome as yourselves, Señores."

The fellow's manners were courteous. There was an appearance of respectability and even gentleness about him. The night without was dark, and threatening rain; and leaving his horse to the care of the faithful guide, Jean, wishing that the Ohioans might have been as fortunate as himself, in obtaining shelter from the coming storm, entered the house with a feeling of much satisfaction.

In the large room, where he seated himself, he found, besides his host, another Mexican, whose countenance was not of a very prepossessing character; but not much more forbidding than the dark skinned natives of his class usually are. Besides these persons, there was an old woman, who seemed to be the mistress of the house, and a rather pretty young Señorita, to whom the Frenchman immediately directed his compliments. But the girl received his advances with apparent indifference, and he observed that she frequently leaned her face upon her hands, as though suffering from pain, or anxiety, and he fancied she occasionally looked upon him, with an expression of uneasiness.

As the express rider, like most of his countrymen in our army, had acquired a perfect knowledge of the Spanish, the old Mexican remarked that for an American he spoke their language remarkably well—equal, in fact, to a Castilian.

"I am no American," said he.

"No American!" repeated the Mexican, with an expression of surprise; "then what countryman are you, may I ask?"

"I am a Frenchman," replied Jean.

"Oh, then," was the answer, "you are almost half Spaniard. But, if I am not much mistaken, you are here with those Americanos, after all!"

There was a peculiar manner about his host, and a certain tone of voice, as he made this last remark, that caused a feeling of uneasiness in the mind of the Frenchman, and for a few moments he made no reply; and when at length he spoke, asserting that he was now temporarily in the employ of the Americans, he heard a sound, like a half-suppressed sigh, from the young woman at his side.

At this moment Jose returned from the stable, and approaching Jean, whispered:

"I hope, Señor, these people are friendly; but there is something about the place I don't like. The other buildings are full of suspicious-looking fellows, who seem to me to be guerillas!"

Startling as was this report, which in his own mind was corroborated by the manners of the people in the house, and convinced the Frenchman that they had fallen into a trap, he preserved his presence of mind; and knowing it would be worse than folly to attempt to escape from the place by force, assumed a tranquil manner, and inquired of the people if they could supply himself and companion with supper.

While the women engaged themselves in preparation of the meal, Jean contrived to communicate with the guide, and directed him to keep a good eye upon the men without, while he watched the two men in the house.

After a comfortable meal had been partaken of, the old woman and the two men withdrew, bidding our travellers a cheerful "good night," and calling upon them the guardianship of all the saints, while the girl remained behind for a moment, to direct them to their sleeping-place.

She led them to an inner apartment—a sort of lumber room—from which a rickety ladder led to an upper loft.

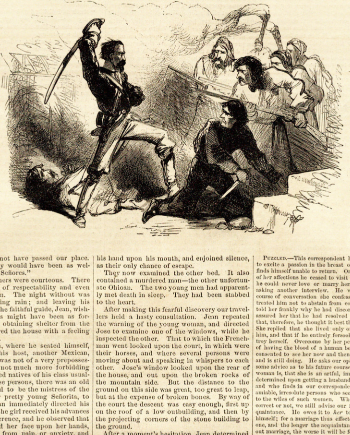
"Up there, Señores," said she, in an audible voice, evidently intended for other ears as well as those of the strangers, "you will find vacant cots. Take those upon the right; and do not, if you please, disturb the sleepers upon the other cots—they doubtless sleep soundly from fatigue. *Muy buenos noches!*" (very good night.) And then approaching her face to the ear of the Frenchman, she added, in a whisper: "For the love of God, Señor, fly from this place! Your life is in danger! Wait till all is quiet, and escape from the window of the room!"

Of course, Jean was now convinced that the suspicions of his guide were correct. The place, without doubt, was a rendezvous of guerillas; and his own life, and that of the Mexican, his companion, was determined upon.

However, without communicating his discovery to the man, he groped his way to the spot where the girl had directed him to find the cots, and seated himself upon one, while Jose took possession of the other. Jean now looked about the place, and in the obscurity found himself in a large attic room, devoted chiefly to the storage of maize, and saddles, and such rubbish as would naturally accumulate about a Mexican farmhouse. At each end of the apartment was a small, open window; and by the dim light which struggled through them, he perceived two other cots, upon which two persons were lying, covered, face and all, with Mexican *serapes*.

There was something in the breathless repose of the sleepers, that startled the Frenchman; and cautiously approaching one of the cots, he stooped his head to the face of the occupant, and listened. Not a sound was heard—there was none of that heavy respiration peculiar to the wearied sleeper. By degrees his vision became accustomed to the obscurity, and raising a corner of the serape, his eye fell upon the face of a corpse! He immediately recognized it as that of one of the Ohioans.

Horror-struck by the sight, he motioned Jose to his side, and stripping down the covering, exposed the bloody clothing of the murdered man. The Mexican would have uttered an exclamation of alarm, had not the Frenchman placed his hand upon his mouth, and enjoined silence, as their only chance of escape.



They now examined the other bed. It also contained a murdered man—the other unfortunate Ohioan. The two young men had apparently met death in sleep. They had been stabbed to the heart.

After making this fearful discovery our travellers held a hasty consultation. Jean repeated the warning of the young woman, and directed Jose to examine one of the windows, while he inspected the other. That to which the Frenchman went looked upon the court, in which were their horses, and where several persons were moving about and speaking in whispers to each other. Jose's window looked upon the rear of the house, and out upon the broken rocks of the mountain side. But the distance to the ground on this side was great, too great to leap, but at the expense of broken bones. By way of the court the descent was easy enough, first up on the roof of a low outbuilding, and then by the projecting corners of the stone building to the ground.

After a moment's hesitation, Jean determined to attempt this passage, even into the midst of the guerillas, who were within the court. For this purpose he examined his revolvers, loosened his sabre, and directed Jose to see also to his arms. He was about to let himself from the window when a noise at the other window attracted his attention. Stepping lightly across the floor, he peered out of this last, and perceived a pole leaning against the building, within reach of his hand. To this was attached a long lariat of rawhide. There was evidently some friendly assistance below, and drawing the rope through the window, they were provided with a sure and safe means of descent. It was the work of a moment only to tie one end of this to one end of the rafters, and so drop cautiously to the ground.

As Jean, who was first to descend, let himself from the window, he heard hurried voices in the room below; and immediately several men made a rush for the attic; the next instant a carbine shot was heard, followed by a cry of terror, and the body of poor Jose, who was that moment stepping from the window, fell with a crushing weight upon him, causing the Frenchman to lose his hold upon the rope and to fall to the ground.

Though considerably injured by the fall, he did not lose his presence of mind; and regaining his feet, looked about him for the most practicable mode of escape. While thus reconnoitering the place, a dark object approached from the shadow of the building, and beckoned him to follow. It was the girl who had given him warning of his danger. He was about to join her when the gate of the court suddenly opened, and supplied with lighted torches, a score of Mexicans rushed out and surrounded the place. Jean found himself enclosed in the ring of eager ruffians, while the girl, pointing toward the side of the mountain, made good her own escape.

"Death to the *Maldito Americano!*" shouted the fierce robber gang, as they caught sight of the Frenchman, and rattled shot after shot among the loose stones and rubbish where he was endeavoring to secrete himself.

Finding it impossible thus to elude his enemies, Jean now determined to cut his way through them. He drew his sabre, which he placed under his handless arm; and then with one of his revolvers charged upon the guerillas. They were well armed, and fought with a ferocious bravery.

After discharging the six barrels of one revolver, each of which dispatched a Mexican, the fearless Frenchman had resort to his sabre; and as his assailants gathered about him, he dealt his blows about him right and left, till, to use his own words, he "built a barricade of dead greasers about him."

Finding the way now open to him, he made good his escape to the rocks, toward which the girl had directed him. But though now out of the lair of the robbers, he was far from being out of danger. He knew his enemies would pursue him, and being familiar with the wild country, might easily track him out.

Many and various were the hair-breadth escapes through which the brave expressman passed ere he made good his escape from the mountains; for through that long night, and until he came within sight of the white walls of Serralvo, the guerillas, infuriated by the loss of their comrades, continued to pursue him; and more than once they were almost within touching distance of him. At these times his fingers itched to press the trigger of his pistol upon them, but prudence dictated a better course; and finally, when the day was nearly spent, exhausted with fatigue, hunger and excitement, he reached the camp of Colonel Morgan, and placed in his hands the despatch with which he had been entrusted.

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THE most beautiful may be the most admired and caressed, but they are not always the most esteemed and loved.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

[All the Questions under this head are actually received by us through the mail. We state this because we learn that many persons have supposed some of them to be *manufactured* for the purpose of adaptng the answers to them. They are all genuine, written evidently in good faith, and answered to the best of our ability.]

B. D. sends us a long complaint, the substance of which is that a young lady friend to whom he has condescendingly devoted his Sunday evenings for some time, "went off last Sunday evening with another young man, and did not return till a late hour." Very well, what of it? The idea of your "waiting for an apology" from the young lady is absurd. We do not consider any young lady bound to sit waiting for a "Sunday night" young man, unless she chooses to do so. She does not inquire what young ladies you visit on week-day evenings; when she does, it will be time for you to talk about "apologies."

Plunkett.—Would electricity cure an unfortunate nervousness and tremor in one of your hands, which prevents you from writing? We are frequently asked similar questions, and can only reply that as no rule or remedy answers in all cases, it is always the safest course to apply to a competent physician for counsel.

S. S. S.—You should have asked the young lady to attend church with you beforehand, and not have gone to her home for that purpose on Sabbath morning.

X. Y. Z.—Remain true until she proves herself unworthy of you. The opposition of parents generally produces just what they are striving to avert.

M. A.—The piano was invented by a German named Zumpi, and the first instrument manufactured in London was made in 1766.

Puzzled.—This correspondent has had the misfortune to excite a passion in the breast of a woman, which he finds himself unable to return. On discovering the state of her affections he ceased to visit her, as he felt certain he could never love or marry her. She wrote to him, asking another interview. He went to her. In the course of conversation she confessed her love, and entreated him not to abstain from coming to see her. He told her frankly why he had discontinued his visits, and assured her that he had resolved never to marry, and that, therefore, he thought it best they should never meet. She replied that she lived only on the hope of seeing him, and that if he entirely forsook her she should destroy herself. Overcome by her persuasions, and fearful of having the blood of a human being upon his soul, he consented to see her now and then, which he has done, and is still doing. He asks our opinion of this affair and some advice as to his future course. Our opinion of the woman is, that she is an artful, immodest hussy, who is determined upon getting a husband by fair means or foul, and who finds in our correspondent one of those soft, amiable, irresolute persons who seem born to fall a prey to the wiles of such women. Whether this opinion be correct or not, we still advise our friend to drop her acquaintance. He owes it to *her* to do so, as well as to himself; for a marriage thus effected cannot be a happy one, and the longer the acquaintance is continued without marriage, the worse it will be for both.

Constant Reader.—The vile humbug of the spiritual mediums, we see, is not yet quite extinct among us. Our friend, Constant Reader, sends us a tale of blasphemy and imposture such as we could not have supposed possible in an age like this. He says that he attended a spiritual circle lately, where a farmer stated that he had found one of his horses dead in a field, and wished to know how the animal came to its death. The farmer was put into communication with the spirit of the dead horse, when the following conversation took place between them: "Is it well with you in the spirit-land?" "Yes." "Did you die a natural death?" "No." "Were you murdered?" "Yes." "Were you shot?" "No." "Were you killed with an axe?" "Yes." "How many were there of the murderers?" "One." "Do I know the man who killed you?" "Yes." "Will you answer to his name if I mention it?" "Yes." "Was it ——?" "No." "Was it ——?" "Yes." "Are you sure it was he who killed you?" "Yes." "Did he do it in the night?" "Yes." "Has he told any one he did it?" "No." What astounding silliness! Such a circle in an ignorant community might do most serious harm, in disseminating calumny, and giving opportunity for the gratification of private malice.

Repentence comes to us to ask our advice, having experienced certain misgivings of conscience, awakened by one of our "answers," in regard to the exchange of likenesses between young ladies and gentlemen. She says: "Now, as I have quite a number of the articles in question, and was only engaged to *four* of the gentlemen at the time they presented them, I want to know what I shall do. Would it be best to return them to their former owners, and tell them that, having lately 'cut my wisdom teeth,' I have arrived at the conclusion that no young lady with proper self-respect would accept, much less retain, any such tokens?" Then comes the dilemma: "But, you see, that would be admitting that I have been deficient in that respect," which our correspondent does not seem willing to do. It strikes us that you had better return the likenesses, saying you have no further use for them, and be careful in future how you get into such dilemmas.

Arthur.—You had a misunderstanding with a lady friend, through the malice of some unknown person. A gentleman "friend" of yours improves the opportunity to wait upon her at all times; you don't like it. Of course you don't; his *friendship* is rather questionable. Perhaps *he* was the cause of the misunderstanding. Your best way will be to have a frank interview with the young lady, and find out just how matters stand. A little point of pride should not be permitted to subject you to a painful suspense, that could be solved in a few moments either one way or the other.

Alonzo.—You say that you had been in the habit of calling on a young lady; that lately you told her that you were coming on a certain evening, and you complain that when you arrived you found another young man there who had been in the habit of visiting her. What of that? You had no right at all to her *exclusive society*, unless you were an avowed lover. It is a mistake for a young man who is *not* an accepted suitor to suppose that a young lady is bound to compromise herself by allowing attentions from him alone. You must be either a selfish or an ignorant fellow.

Anonymous.—We are generally in favor of mercy and forgiveness, but yours seems to be a case for stern unyieldingness. A wife who can terminate a long course of wantonness by abandoning an unweaned infant and flying to a distant State with a paramour, is a woman whose reform it is foolish to hope for or believe in. She is out of the pale. Her penitential letters are not likely to be sincere; she probably writes them because she has begun to discover the difference between the precarious and disgraceful protection of a villain and the honorable safety of a home.

Tudor.—The chrysolite is not now considered very precious. It is a golden-yellow crystal, sometimes used in jewelry. Othello says:

> "Nay, had she been true,
> If Heaven would make me such another world
> Of one entire and perfect Chrysolite,
> I'd not have sold her for it."

From these words we may infer that in Shakspeare's day the chrysolite was more valued than it now is.

C. W.—The old story; the girl loves you—you love the girl—parents hard-hearted—you and the girl desperate. It won't do either of you any harm to wait. Very likely, if you don't insist on speedy measures, the "old folks" will accede to their daughter's wishes. Be honorable, manly and patient.

Pen puts the following metaphysical question: "If a man love a woman, and cannot conquer that love, is it a voluntary or involuntary passion?" This is a good question for discussion, and we should like to hear the opinions of our friends in regard to it.

C. G. H.—The meerschaum pipes are composed of a kind of clay found in various parts of Europe, and not of the *foam of the sea*. Meerschaum means "sea-foam;" the clay being thus named because it *lathers*, and then looks like sea-foam.

J. G. K. says he has been paying his addresses to a young lady with a view to marriage, but is deterred from proposing by some "village gossip," of which the lady has been the subject "for a number of years." He wishes to know how to go to work to find out the truth in regard to the reports. It is certainly a delicate task to investigate reports derogatory to the character of one we love, and it is necessary to proceed cautiously and considerately. By proceeding to question indiscriminately any and all persons whom you may hear mention the reports, your interest in them will give rise to further gossip, and also injure the young lady still more by reviving the stories and setting them again in circulation. We would advise that you find some one who is familiar with the events which gave rise to the reports, or who knows the source from whence they originated, and who is also a person upon whom you can rely, and ask that person in regard to them. You cannot question the lady herself until you have proposed and been accepted, and you must judge for yourself, whether you would choose to pursue that course, and then frankly ask her for an explanation of the circumstances.

German.—Lightning rods properly constructed and attached to a building, are thought to protect it from injury by lightning, and for persons, without any evidence, to say that they are "not good for much," shows them to be unacquainted with the principle upon which they are made. Metallic substances are the best conductors of electricity, and consequently lightning will be attracted to, or strike upon, a metallic rod, in preference to any portion of the building. These rods, being insulated where they come in contact with the building, by rings of glass, prevent the electricity from passing into the building; and being thus confined to the rod, it passes quietly to the ground. Care should be taken to make the lightning rod the most prominent object, and also to put up a sufficient number to protect the *whole* building. As a general thing, a lightning rod will protect an area of about twenty feet each way, so that more than one may be necessary to protect a large building. Instances may have occurred where houses which were not sufficiently protected, were struck by lightning; but one having a sufficient number of rods, properly placed, is secure from injury.

Lucy.—We would never advise a young lady to marry a man whom she does not love, however much she may esteem and respect him as a friend. Still less would we be inclined to advise her to marry him, when she already loves another; for in that case she would be inflicting unhappiness upon both herself and her lover, and doing injustice to the one she married. If your parents are opposed to your engaging yourself to the young man, obey and do all that you can to please them, and when you are of age you can act for yourself. A daughter should be careful how she opposes the wishes of her parents; but as you say you are in your twenty-first year, and in love with a young gentleman, that the one whom your parents wish you to marry is twice your age, and that you dislike him exceedingly, we think you would be justified in waiting until you arrive at your majority, and in then marrying the man of your choice, provided he is worthy of your love.

Sylvia.—We always feel it a pleasure to encourage any one who exhibits a desire to acquire knowledge and to cultivate a love for literature, and any questions you may desire to ask we will answer to the best of our ability. You ask "what books would it be best to read or study in order to gain a perfect knowledge of all the classical allusions that we meet with in reading?" If, as you say, you have studied mythology, the histories of Greece and Rome, and the Greek and Roman Antiquities, we would advise you to read the biographies and the writings of the different Greek and Roman authors, and especially to consult the classical dictionary for any names and allusions to stories and traditions that you may meet with in the works of those authors.

Y.—It is thought by some that the term "Yankees" was given to the Americans by the British, during the Revolution. The generally received opinion, however, is, that it is derived from the Indians, who, in attempting to pronounce the word "English" got it "Yengeese," from whence the term "Yankees" is easily obtained. The term *Messrs.* is an abbreviation of the French word Messieurs, and was formerly pronounced like the full word; but we Americans have such a propensity for shortening everything, that we abbreviate the pronunciation of words as well as the orthography. The word is now pronounced just as it is spelled—Mess-rs.

Cockney.—The letter "h" is derived from the Greek, where it was not a distinct letter, but only a character placed over the initial vowel of a word, to denote what is termed the "rough or aspirate breathing." Its form was that of a semicircle with the opening turned to the right. From thence it was translated into the Latin as a distinct letter, as we now find it in our own language. In English it is generally sounded, that is the aspiration given, wherever it is printed, except in such words as *honor*, *hour*, &c., and these exceptions can only be learned by observation.

Richardson.—It is generally conceded that Richard M. Johnson is the individual who killed Tecumseh, during the battle of the Thames. Col. Johnson upon being asked in regard to the affair, said that he was wounded in the battle, and fell from his horse. On looking up he beheld a powerful savage just about to tomahawk him, whereupon he drew his pistol and shot the Indian; "and," said the Colonel, "under those circumstances I would have shot any man, without stopping to ask his name." This Indian is supposed to have been Tecumseh.

Uxor.—There are very few circumstances which would render it proper for you to address a letter to a lady whom you had seen and conversed with but once. If she be a married lady, and you wish to communicate with her, you should do it through her husband; if a young lady and unmarried, you should address her through her parents; and if she be her own mistress and guardian, your business must be very urgent to warrant you in writing to her after having met her but once.

Farmer.—We would not advise you to leave your situation and come to this city, hoping to obtain a situation in an office of which you speak. There are more applicants here now than there are vacancies for them; and without friends or influence you would stand a poor chance of obtaining the situation you desire. Keep your present situation, even if it is a little irksome, until you are *sure* of doing better.

Yankee.—You might address your letter to the Commissioner of Patents, or simply "Patent Office," Washington, D. C. It will be necessary for you to furnish the commissioner with a model of your invention. The cost for obtaining a patent and all other information which you may desire, is contained in a pamphlet which will be sent to you on application at that office.

J. M. S.—A gentleman should always *precede* a lady in going *up* stairs, and *follow* her in going *down*. In crossing the street, he should go by her side, or if this is inconvenient—as on a narrow cross-walk—he should allow her the precedence, unless there should be a crowd, in which case he should go before, and open the way for her.

Etiquette.—You should have offered your services, when two young ladies, living in the same house with you, were going out in the evening without an escort, without waiting for them to give you some hint that your company would be desirable. If they had then refused, you would have done your duty, and they could not blame you.

Randolph.—Solicit the lady's hand of her father in person, even if you are "not on good terms" with him. If you are conscious that you have done nothing to incur his displeasure, you need not hesitate to see him. Perhaps he will inform you what his objections are, and you can then have an opportunity to remove them if possible.

A. C. A.—A young gentleman, after escorting a young lady to a place of amusement, should certainly see her safe home again, and no apology, unaccompanied with good and sufficient reasons for his neglect, should be received from one who should leave her to find her way home alone.

Inquirer.—The letters "viz." are an abbreviation of the Latin word "videlicet," which is itself a contraction. The full form is "videre licet," which literally means "it may be seen," or "it is evident," or "apparent," from whence came the derivative "namely," and the phrase "to wit."

Nettie.—A young lady must be very fickle, and coquettish, and destitute of true womanly dignity and self-respect, to accept presents of gold rings, ambrotypes, locks of hair, &c., from different gentlemen; and her position will be very unpleasant, to say the least, when her conduct comes to light.

Navigation.—You can acquire a knowledge of navigation by a voyage or two under some experienced sea captain, of intelligence and ability, who thoroughly understands the art theoretically and practically.

E. E.—We know of no better way of finding out, conclusively and satisfactorily, whether a young lady loves you or not, than to declare yourself, and receive the answer from her own lips.

A. C. R.—We do not think of any circumstances which would render it "proper for a young man to offer a married lady a ring to wear for friendship's sake," unless she were a relative.

Brokaw.—The engagement ring should be worn upon the *first* finger of the left hand, and the marriage ring upon the *third* finger of the same hand.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*